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THE

WRITINGS

OF

JANE TAYLOR.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

DISPLAY, AND ESSAYS IN RHYME.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY PERKINS & MARVIN
PHILADELPHIA—FRENCH & PERKINS.
1832.

DISPLAY,

A TALE.

BY THE LATE

JANE TAYLOR.

Examine thyself well; — see if thou art not tainted with this evil.
Jurieu.

FROM TWELFTH LONDON EDITION.

BOSTON:
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1832.

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DISPLAY.

CHAPTER I.

'I WISH we were not going this evening,' said Elizabeth; 'they say Mrs. Fellows is so clever, and so satirical, that I shall be afraid of speaking a word.'

'Dear now, I am glad we are going,' replied Emily, 'we have heard so much of Mrs. Fellows; and I had not thought about being afraid of her.'

'I trust of all things they will not ask us to play. I would not play before Mrs. Fellows for all the world,' added Elizabeth.

'I had rather not, certainly,' said Emily, 'and yet I do not think I should mind it so very much.'

'How I envy you having so much courage,' said Elizabeth; 'I am such a silly, timid creature!'

It was true that the dispositions of these young people differed essentially: they belonged to opposite classes of character; which—to borrow terms used long ago in a different sense, in

scholastic controversy—might be called *Nominalists* and *Realists*.

Emily was a *Realist:* whatever she did, said, or *looked*, was in earnest: she possessed the grace of SIMPLICITY;—a simplicity which appeared alike in her virtues and her faults. It was neither from insensibility, nor self-conceit, that she thought of her introduction to this formidable lady with so much composure. Modest people are not the soonest frightened:—'I wonder what they will think of *me?*' is not the inquiry of humility, but of vanity.

Now this inquiry Elizabeth was making perpetually: to speak, to move, to weep, or to smile, were with her but so many manœuvres, which she was practising for *effect*, and to attract attention. The prospect, the picture, or the poem, which Emily admired with all her *heart*, Elizabeth admired with all her *eloquence;* too intent upon exhibiting her taste or sensibility, to be truly the subject of either.

It was this disposition to *display*, that made her anxious about the expected visit: Emily was going that she might see Mrs. Fellows; Elizabeth, that Mrs. Fellows might see *her*.

From the conference with her friend, Elizabeth went directly to her dressing-room. She would have given away half her ornaments to know whether Mrs. Fellows wore ornaments. 'As she is a literary lady, I dare say she despises dress,'

thought Elizabeth, as she looked at her pearl bracelets; and she clasped and unclasped them several times; but at last put them on in a hurry, because there was no time left to deliberate.

Elizabeth and Emily went together to their friend's house. Emily happened to take off her glove in the hall. 'You have no bracelets on!' said Elizabeth. This was a comparison she could not bear:—'Mrs. Fellows would think her a mere doll.' 'Wait one moment,' said she; but in snatching one of the bracelets from her arm it broke; and the pearls wandered deliberately to every corner of the hall. 'O your beautiful pearls!' said Emily. But just as she and the footman were beginning the search, a rap, long and loud, announced the arrival of other company. It was Mrs. Fellows herself. 'Oh, never mind, never mind,' cried Elizabeth, shocked at the idea of being caught by a learned lady in the act of collecting beads—'Thomas will look for them.' And, drawing on her glove still more eagerly than she had taken it off, she hurried much discomposed to the drawing-room.

The first glance at Mrs. Fellows when she made her appearance, convinced Elizabeth that this literary lady was no despiser of dress; and she now regretted the misfortune that had befallen her bracelet.

Mrs. Fellows was reputed a universal genius: besides excelling all the masters in all the usual

accomplishments, she was a botanist, and a chemist, and an anatomist. She had written sonnets, and a novel, and a tragedy; and appeared—at least among the *noblesse* of an obscure country town—a prodigy of learning and genius.

Nothing could be more ill founded than Elizabeth's expectation of attracting the attention of this gifted lady. Satisfied with being herself the object of attention, and engrossed by the display of her own accomplishments, she had little leisure or inclination to observe those of others. She was presently engaged in conversation with two or three gentlemen; and the whole evening would have passed without Elizabeth's being able to ascertain whether she had once attracted her notice, if she had not happened to hear her say—after catching her eye for a moment—'about the height of that young lady.'

How much anxiety and vexation do they escape, who mix in society with a simple, unambitious temper!

The business which brought Mrs. Fellows from town, was to dispose of an estate in this neighborhood to a relation.

'I understand we shall have a great acquisition in this new family,' observed a lady.

'Very much so, I assure you,' replied Mrs. Fellows; 'my cousin is a very sensible, excellent, clever, worthy man; and educates his family in a vastly superior manner.'

'Any of the young gentlemen grown up?' inquired a matron.

'Oh no; the eldest I think is but ten years old.'

'Only ten years old!' said three young ladies in a breath.

'There is a tutor, and a governess, I suppose,' resumed the lady.

'No tutor; my cousin at present superintends their education entirely himself; Mrs. Leddenhurst has a governess, I believe; but really I can give you very little information about them,' said she; 'I have scarcely seen any thing of them of late; indeed, my cousin and his wife have some peculiarities, which render them not altogether so entirely agreeable as one could wish.' And here she changed the conversation; leaving the company in a state of suspense about these 'peculiarities:' but it was not insupportable suspense, because the family was expected in six weeks; 'and then we shall know all about it,' thought Mrs. P——, and Mrs. M——, and the three Miss C——'s, and old Mrs. G——, and young Mrs. G——, and Dr. W——.

At length it was requested that Mrs. Fellows would play. The lively terms in which Elizabeth expressed her pleasure at this proposal were lost amid the general din of solicitation.

'What taste! what execution!' she exclaimed repeatedly, during the performance.

When it was over, Mrs. Fellows insisted that some of the company should take her place.

Elizabeth advanced a step or two within the line of observation.

'Miss Palmer, my dear,' said the lady of the house, turning towards her: but in the meantime another lady had been prevailed upon.

'What an escape for you!' whispered Emily.

'Yes, indeed,' replied Elizabeth faintly, 'what an escape!'

When the party broke up, Elizabeth, as she wished her friend Emily good night, added in a whisper—

'How much I am disappointed in Mrs. Fellows!'

Elizabeth and Emily were friends, as it often happens, rather from accident than congeniality. They had been playfellows from their infancy; and when they ceased to play, they had continued to associate.

Emily was affectionate; and she loved Elizabeth sincerely: Elizabeth felt as much regard for Emily as for any one she knew: but vanity chills the heart; and in proportion as she became conscious of the slightness of her affection, she grew lavish in her professions of it. But notwithstanding the difference in their tastes and dispositions, there were some respects in which they suited each other. Elizabeth could by no means have tolerated a friend, who had been taller, or fairer,

or considered more clever than herself. Perhaps she was not aware how much of her regard for Emily, and the pleasure she felt in her society, depended upon her own acknowledged superiority in these respects.

Elizabeth was now more than nineteen years old; Emily nearly a year younger, and most people thought, 'Elizabeth Palmer much handsomer than Emily Grey.' They had always lived among people who allowed their *full* value to external advantages; and Elizabeth's superiority to her friend was a circumstance entirely taken for granted between them; and the deference naturally claimed by the one, was peaceably yielded by the other.

As for Emily, a companion who would talk, and leave her to think and feel as she pleased, suited her better than one who had been disposed to interfere with her thoughts and feelings. Yet she occasionally sighed for something more like her own idea of friendship, than she had ever found in associating with Elizabeth.

CHAPTER II.

One morning, Elizabeth and several others called upon Emily. There was now an opportunity, they said, of going over the house and grounds at Stokely, as it was open to the workmen, and a great many people had been to see it.

It was a pleasant walk from the town: the house stood on a rising ground, and, embosomed in fine trees, was a picturesque object in all directions.

'What a pity that such a pretty place should be shut up!' had been said year after year by many a traveller. But now every thing indicated that inhabitants were expected.

'Let us go over the house first,' said several of the party, as they sprang nimbly up the steps to the hall door.

'You must take care of the paint, young ladies,' said the workmen, as they flocked into the hall.

While they steered their way among work-tables and scaffolding, and over heaps of shavings and sawdust, and passed from one apartment to another, they expressed their opinions in various tones and terms of admiration. 'What a charming room *this* is!' and 'what a delightful room *this* will be!'

'What a sweet place this would be for a ball-room!' said one, bounding in upon a fine smooth floor, and humming a few notes of a country dance.

'If I were Mrs. Leddenhurst, I would have this for my dressing-room, or study, or something,' said another, as they passed on.

'This is exactly such a kind of a room as I should like for myself,' cried a third. 'I wonder what *this* is to be? I wish there was somebody to tell one what the rooms are to be,' said a fourth. 'I wonder whether I shall ever live in such a nice house as this!' exclaimed a little girl. 'Silly child!' said her sister, who was old enough not to wonder *aloud*.

They next attempted a door which they could not open. 'That room is locked up and I can't part with the key upon no account,' said a person, who seemed to be a superintendent.

'Dear, I wonder what there can be so particularly curious within,' said Elizabeth, looking through the key-hole.

'Nothing particularly curious *within;* they are my books, ladies, which I shall be very happy to show you when they are in better order,' said a gentleman who at that instant appeared on the staircase, and passed on: this was said with a graceful bow, and a very good-natured smile. They were all silent in a moment: and stood coloring, and looking silly at each other: for when

a party of young ladies are rambling at large over an empty house, it is highly probable that some silly and impertinent things will be said; and each was now trying to recollect what *she* happened to be saying, when the stranger appeared. Elizabeth remembered *her* speech very distinctly.

'It must be Mr. Leddenhurst himself, I suppose,' said she, in a low voice.

'Oh, you may depend upon that, for you know he said *my* books,' replied one of her companions.

'I thought he was to go away with Mrs. Fellows; I had no idea he was here now,' continued Elizabeth, in a vexed whisper.

'Don't you wish you had not been looking through the key-hole?' said another of her friends.

'Oh, I don't believe he saw that; I am certain he could not possibly see that,' said Elizabeth, sharply.

'Well,' said Emily, 'I believe we have been all over the house now.'—So the party returned quietly home.

The trees of Stokely were bright with the tints of autumn, before it was in complete readiness for its new inhabitants.

One fine evening in October, a travelling carriage, covered with dust, was seen driving through the town; and it was observed to take the road

leading to Stokely Park. The travellers were fatigued with their journey: for they had come from a great distance.

'Where are we come to now?' said a little girl, in a sleepy voice, who was roused by their stopping at a turnpike.

'Just coming into Broadisham,' said her father: 'and now, children, in a few minutes we shall get a sight of Stokely.'

'Of Stokely! and is this Broadisham?' They were all alive in an instant, and looked out eagerly from one side of the way to the other. "Ladies' boot and shoe warehouse—Hodson, Dyer, and Hodson—Eve's fancy dress and millinery rooms—Ladies' school—Phœnix fire-office—Pryke, haberdasher'—read little Lucy, as they drove through the town.

'What a handsome bridge we are coming to now!' said Richard. 'And there is Stokely,' said Mr. Leddenhurst; 'those dark trees, just in the sunset.'

The children now expected to stop every moment; but the road had many a tiresome sweep to make still. At length it became shaded by a row of graceful elms; and a fir grove, with park-paling, bespoke their near approach. And now the gate flew open, and they drove straight up the avenue.

'What a different looking place it is to what I expected!' said Richard.

'Yes,' said Lucy, 'but a great deal prettier.'

While the father listened to their eager observations, Mrs. Leddenhurst and her friend beside her sat in silence. It was not the extent of the estate, nor the beauty of the scenery—but life, and its vicissitudes, that occupied her thoughts, as she drove up to her new residence.

In a short time Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst had been visited by most of their neighbors.

Being people of good sense and discernment, they were not particularly gratified by these specimens of their new society: nevertheless their guests were received with much courtesy and kindness; for their good sense was graced with good-breeding, and their discernment was softened by benevolence.

It was generally agreed that Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst were very agreeable people; and no one had detected the peculiarities which had been hinted at. They were well dressed, and well bred; they wondered what Mrs. Fellows could mean. Emily was the first to unraval the mystery.

On the morning that she and her father called, Miss Weston—of whom nobody could determine whether she was 'a friend or the governess'—was inquiring if there were any one in the town who took in needle-work. Emily said there was a young woman who used to work very neatly, but she remembered hearing of her being ill,

and did not know whether she could undertake it at present;—'but I will inquire about it immediately,' said she. Miss Weston said she intended to be in the town the next morning; and that if she pleased they would go together.

Emily was glad of this proposal; for there was something in Miss Weston—the expression of her countenance, and the sweetness of her manner—that attracted her attention. There was other company in the room; and they did not sit near enough to converse together; but she could not help looking at her continually: and their eyes met so often, that at last Emily felt quite ashamed.

Miss Weston called the next day at the time appointed. They had to go a little way out of the town; and during their walk she engaged in such agreeable conversation, that Emily could not help wishing she might have Miss Weston for a friend.

When they arrived at Eleanor Jones's, her mother opened the door—'Does your daughter take in plain work, Mrs. Jones?' said Emily.

'Yes, Miss—that's to say she used to do,' said the widow Jones; 'but my poor child is so ill, ladies!'

'Mother,' said a feeble voice from within, 'ask the ladies to please to walk in.'

'Yes, let us go in,' said Miss Weston.

They found Eleanor Jones sitting by the fire in a tall arm chair; she looked extremely weak and

ill, but her cheeks were flushed at the entrance of strangers;—she spoke with difficulty.

'If it is not much in a hurry, ladies, I think I could undertake a little job,' said she, coughing.

'I am afraid it would fatigue you too much,' said Miss Weston: 'you appear very unwell: has your daughter had advice, Mrs. Jones?'

'The doctor as 'tends the parish, ma'am, he sent her some drops in the spring, but he has n't been up here o'some time now—only the young gentleman; and he says the cough's of no consequence—but dear me! she coughs sadly o'nights.'

'Can she take any nourishing things?' said Miss Weston.

'Oh, she's no liking at all to her meat, ma'am,' said the mother; 'she takes nothing scarce but fruit, and such like, and now the fruit is just over.'

'Do you think you should like some grapes?' said Miss Weston.

'Yes, I should like some grapes very much, I think,' said Eleanor Jones; 'but my wants are very few now, and I know that all the doctors in the world could do me no good—my time here is very short.'

'Oh, you will get better soon, I hope,' said Emily; 'you must not be so lowspirited.'

'I am not lowspirited,' she replied; 'I am very happy, and if it was not for my poor mother, I should not have a wish or a want.'

Emily looked rather puzzled at this, but Miss

Weston seemed to understand her. There was a Bible open upon the table; and Miss Weston, laying her hand upon it, said,

'It is *this*, I hope, that makes you happy; whether we are sick or well, there is no real happiness but what is to be found here.'

At this the invalid looked up with great animation, saying, 'O ma'am, I am glad to hear you say so, I am rejoiced to think you know that; yes, yes, the Bible made me happy when I was well, and now that I am ill and dying, it makes me still happier.'

Emily listened in silence to the conversation which now commenced; and she was surprised and affected at what she heard. She had often read in the newspaper, and heard among her acquaintance, about 'bearing a long affliction with Christian fortitude;' and about 'resignation to the will of Heaven;' but she now heard sentiments expressed which were entirely new to her. She was surprised that Miss Weston and this poor girl, although entire strangers, and in very different circumstances, seemed so completely to understand each other; and to think and feel so much alike upon the subjects about which they were conversing.

'You have talked long enough now,' said Miss Weston at length, in a kind voice; and she took leave, saying she would call again to see her in a few days.

'Miss Weston, I have a favor to ask you,' said Emily, after they had walked a little way in silence.

'What is that?'

'I scarcely know what I mean, exactly,' said she, 'but I did not understand several things poor Eleanor Jones said just now; indeed I am afraid my religion must be very different from hers; would you be so good as to explain to me—'

'My dear,' said Miss Weston, 'you could not have asked any thing that would give half so much pleasure.'

Her countenance, as she said this, beamed with benevolence; and there was something so kind and encouraging in the manner of her speaking, that it brought the tears into Emily's eyes.

'If I were not such a stranger to you—' said she.

'We will be strangers no longer,' interrupted Miss Weston; 'let us be friends, and talk to each other without reserve; and there is no subject of so much importance, none that can afford such a rational and interesting topic for conversation.'

'And yet,' said Emily, 'I have never been in the habit of conversing upon it, nor of thinking about it much, but I am certain your religion must be very different.'

'You must not call it *my* religion,' said Miss Weston, smiling; 'there is, there can be, but

one true religion, which is that the Bible teaches; and they who most clearly understand, and most consistently practise it, are the wisest and happiest people in the world.'

'I read the Bible on Sundays,' said Emily, 'and I hope I have always done my duty.'

'That is saying a great deal,' observed Miss Weston.

'But I never knew the Almighty required any thing besides?' continued Emily.

'Certainly he requires nothing more than that we should do our duty,' replied Miss Weston; 'but that is a very comprehensive phrase; are you sure you entirely understand it?'

'Not quite sure,' said Emily.

'You have read the Bible,' continued Miss Weston, 'and so have many people; who yet, from pride, prejudice, or indifference, never appear to have understood its meaning. Let me advise you now to read the New Testament with great attention and seriousness; and, my dear, it must be with *humility:* it is God's word; His own message to mankind; and it becomes us to receive it humbly as His creatures. Did you ever make it a subject of earnest prayer, that God would teach you to understand the Scriptures?—Without this, there is the greatest danger of making some important mistake about them; for it is in this way that He directs us to study His word; and in which alone He promises us in-

struction. And when you have read it in this spirit,' continued she, 'you will be better able to judge, whether there is not something in the Christian religion beyond the observance of outward forms and duties; whether there be any tendency in these alone, to produce such effects at the near approach of death as you have just witnessed; the same willingness to resign life, the same peaceful serenity at the thought of death, and the same humble joy in the prospect of a heaven of holiness.'

Emily listened with interest as her friend proceeded: they parted at the turning of the road, having agreed to renew the conversation in their future visits to Eleanor's cottage. She walked home musing on what had passed: her mind was affected and elevated; a new world seemed to have opened to her view, notwithstanding her very indistinct ideas as to its nature and reality.

Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst, as well as their friend, were intelligent Christians: they knew religion to be the most important of all concerns, and they uniformly acted as though they believed it. They felt the disadvantage of coming to reside in a neighbourhood where they had reason to fear its true nature was little understood by those with whom they would be expected to associate; but the hope of being useful reconciled them to the circumstance. There was a general consternation when it was discovered that the

new family at Stokely were, as *they* called them, 'quite methodists:' all marvelled, many murmured, and some mocked. There were a few poor and despised people in this town who had generally borne that or similar names: but then, as a lady observed, 'It was all very well for that sort of people; but what could induce such a family as the Leddenhursts to make themselves so remarkable, was to her a complete mystery: though, to be sure,' said she, 'people of property may do any thing.'

Miss Weston was both 'a friend and the governess:'—a friendship had subsisted between her and Mrs. Leddenhurst from their early youth, which time had strengthened and matured: but it was only of late that she had become an inmate in her family. Though it was perceptible to none but accurate observers of feelings and faces, Miss Weston was a sufferer:—it is easy to wear a pensive smile, but hers was a smile of cheerfulness; and she was generally spoken of as being 'remarkably cheerful.'

As to the cause of her sorrow, only a conjecture can be formed; because Mrs. Leddenhurst, who was the only person in whom she had confided, never betrayed her confidence. Among the numerous sources of human wo, the reader may fix upon, that which to her may appear most difficult to endure with fortitude and resigna-

tion. One may conclude she had lost her friend; another her heart; and a third, her fortune; but perhaps, after all, it was something very different from any of these.

Miss Weston's idea of *resignation* was not as one may see it in the print shops—a tall figure, weeping over an urn in the middle of a wood; it was, in her opinion, an active, cheerful, and social principle. It was not, indeed, without an effort, that she resisted her inclination to seek relief in rumination and seclusion; but strength of mind, that is, strength of principle, prevailed. Without waiting to confer with her inclinations, she wrote to her friend Mrs. Leddenhurst, offering to assist her in the education of her little girls.

'You know,' said she, 'how much I love children, and that of all children none are so dear to me as yours. I am quite in earnest in saying that I will come and be the governess for whom you are inquiring: do not raise needless scruples; some employment, that will engage both my time and attention, is essential to me just now; and I think I should engage in the work of education with an interest that would enable my mind to recover its self-possession. Indeed I am impatient to forsake this retirement—sweet and soothing as it is. Let me come, dear Caroline, and exchange these dangerous indulgences for the

more wholesome pleasures of social intercourse and useful occupation.'

Mrs. Leddenhurst, who understood enough of the human heart, and of the character and feelings of her friend, to know that her resolution was as wise as it was courageous, gladly welcomed her to the bosom of her family; where she soon learned to 'smile at grief,' without sitting 'on a monument.'

CHAPTER III.

Of all the young people who had been introduced to the Leddenhursts, there was not one whose appearance pleased them so much as Emily's. They observed that in some important respects her education had been defective; but she seemed amiable, modest, and unaffected; and possessed of good sense, and a strong desire of improvement, which greatly encouraged them in their wishes to serve her.

They perceived that Elizabeth was a less hopeful subject than her companion; but this did not make them less willing to attempt her improvement; for they were not accustomed to shrink from a duty because it was unpleasant, nor to despair of one that was difficult. They were both invited to join the family circle at Stokely as often as they felt disposed. They were not backward to accept this invitation; and an early evening was fixed upon to pay their first friendly visit.

Elizabeth and Emily set off on this occasion with high expectations of gratification and enjoyment. Hitherto they had only seen them with other company; 'but now,' thought Emily, 'we shall be alone, and be able to enjoy their con-

versation:'—'now,' thought Elizabeth, 'we shall be alone, and they must take notice of *me*.'

On their way, they met one of the servants from Stokely, with a basket of grapes.

'There goes a present for somebody: who can it be for, I wonder?' said Elizabeth: 'the Tomkins's—or the Davisons, perhaps.'

'No, no,' said Emily: 'I can easily guess who it is for—poor Eleanor Jones, who is so ill: I know they send her fruit or jellies every day.'

'Well, very likely,' replied Elizabeth; 'for I heard—but really I can scarcely believe it, Mr. Leddenhurst looks such a pleasant, different kind of man — they say, however, that he and Mrs. Leddenhurst were there the other day, and had such a strange conversation! Oh, I cannot remember half the extraordinary things, I heard they said to her.'

'I know they have been to see her,' said Emily, 'and that she was very much pleased with their conversation; I do not think *she* thought it strange.'

'Well, I sincerely hope we shall have no such gloomy, stupid doings to-night!' exclaimed Elizabeth.

'Elizabeth,' said Emily, 'I have heard and thought more about religion since I conversed with Miss Weston than I ever did before; and I really think nothing is so likely to prevent one from being gloomy and stupid; besides, do not

the Leddenhurst's appear remarkably pleasant and cheerful?'

'Yes, in company; people, you know, must be agreeable in company: but I have heard those over-religious kind of folks are miserably dull when they are alone.'

'Well, we shall see,' said Emily.

When they reached Stokely, and entered the room, they found Miss Weston playing a lively tune, to which the children were dancing by the light of the fire. They were cordially welcomed; and Emily felt very happy as the circle formed, and she took her seat by the side of Miss Weston. She looked round, and saw none but cheerful faces; it did not appear to be that kind of cheerfulness which is made at a moment's warning by the rap at the door; they looked as though they had been cheerful and happy all day long.

Elizabeth appeared this evening dressed with taste, but rather over-dressed for the occasion: and this did not pass unobserved; for in the simple action of walking from the door to her chair there was a *manner* that asked for observation—that is, it was *not* a simple action.

Mr. Leddenhurst was looking over a review. 'Poetry! poetry in abundance for you, ladies,' said he 'if you like it.'

'Oh, indeed, I am passionately fond of poetry,' said Elizabeth.

'Passionately fond, are you? Here is an arti-

cle then, that, perhaps, you will do us the favor to read.'

Elizabeth readily complied, for she was fond of reading aloud.

'We select the following passage,' said the injudicious critic, 'for the sake of three lines, which we are persuaded no reader of sensibility will peruse without tears.'

'No reader of sensibility!' thought Elizabeth: but how should she discover for certain which they were in that long quotation? To cry at the wrong place, she justly calculated, would be a worse mistake than not crying at the right; but, fortunately, as she approached the conclusion, the lines in question caught her eye, considerately printed in Italics. She read them with great pathos; and as she read, tears — two undeniable tears — rolled deliberately down her cheeks. Having succeeded in this nice hydraulic experiment, she looked at Emily, and observed with some satisfaction that there was no trace of tears on *her* cheeks; but glancing round at the rest of the company, she felt rather disconcerted to see how perfectly composed every body was looking. — 'Are they not extremely affecting?' said she, appealing to Mrs. Leddenhurst.

'Really I can scarcely tell,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst; 'I always find, that nothing more effectually drives away my tears than having them

bespoke: pathetic touches, to produce their effect, should take the reader by surprise, I think.'

'I question if those lines could have *surprised* me into tears,' said Mr. Leddenhurst.

'O, not *you*, papa!' said Richard, laughing; 'men should never cry, should they, if they can help it?'

'Neither men nor women should cry, if they can help it,' answered his father.

'I can remember seeing papa cry, though,' whispered little Lucy, 'when he was telling mamma how glad the shabby looking gentleman looked at the sight of the guinea; I saw a tear in the corner of his eye, just for a moment.'

Elizabeth was so much absorbed by the little vexation she had just experienced, and by endeavoring to ascertain the precise construction that had been put upon her sensibility, that the conversation had taken a different turn before she was aware, and she found Mr. Leddenhurst in the middle of a long story. He had travelled; and was giving an account of a night he once spent in a Laplander's hut; which the children thought so very entertaining, that they often begged their father to tell it them over again; and they now came from the further end of the room where they were quietly at play, saying,

'Oh, papa is telling about the little Laplanders!'

Elizabeth suddenly roused herself to the ap-

pearance of lively attention. They who feel interest have no need to feign it; but it rarely happened that Elizabeth was really interested by conversation to which she was only a *listener*. The vain and selfish deprive themselves of most *genuine* pleasures. There was nothing now, for her, but to wait till the recital was finished: to wait for *her* turn, with that sort of impatience which good-breeding itself can sometimes scarcely conceal, in those whose sole object in society is *to make an impression*. But Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst had seen the little artifices of vanity practised by greater proficients than Elizabeth. She was not the first person in whom they had observed a greedy impatience to squeeze into conversation every scrap of information that can be collected upon the point in hand. Little do they imagine, who angle for admiration by this and similar methods, how completely their end is defeated, at least with respect to acute observers. They who are intent upon being *heard* and *seen*, are not often *observers;* nor can they believe how easily they are *detected* by those who know how to *hear* and *see*. The involuntary admiration which is inspired by wit or beauty, and especially the respect for talents and acquirements, are, to say the least, *neutralized*, if but a suspicion be excited that they are used as articles of *display*.

Elizabeth would have been really agreeable, if she could but have forgotten to be charming.

Her form was delicate; her face handsome,—and it might have been interesting, if the constant effort to make it so had not given a restlessness to her features which was far from pleasing: her eye first shot its spark, and then looked about for the damage. In her sensibility, especially, there was an appearance of *artificialness*, which rendered it difficult to feel real sympathy with her.

'There is nothing I have ever wished for so much as to travel,' said Elizabeth, when Mr. Leddenhurst had finished his narration; 'it must be so excessively interesting, I should think, especially with an intelligent companion.'

'We, who are obliged to stay at home,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst, 'may, however, enjoy, by our fire-sides, most of the information, and a considerable share of the entertainment of going abroad, we are now so abundantly supplied with the observations of travellers.'

'Yes,' replied Elizabeth; 'and there is no kind of reading I am so partial to as voyages and travels, they are so uncommonly interesting.'

'Very interesting indeed,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst; 'though I cannot say there is *no* kind of reading that I am so partial to.'

'Oh, certainly not; I did not mean to say *no* kind of reading, but—but really I am surprised,' continued she, 'that Mr. Leddenhurst was never prevailed upon to publish his tour; it would, I am *sure*, have been such an acquisition!'

At this Mrs. Leddenhurst only smiled, and began talking to Emily, who had fallen into a revery in *her* turn; but it was not about herself nor the company: her imagination had been carried by Mr. Leddenhurst's narrative to polar regions; and was wandering over fields of ice, and arctic snows, where

> " —— the shapeless bear,
> With dangling ice, all horrid, stalks forlorn"—

when Mrs. Leddenhurst recalled her recollection.

The evening passed rapidly away; and to Emily it was passing very happily: but Elizabeth felt an uneasiness which she would have been at a loss to define; there was nothing to complain of, but she was not *gratified*. She had been brilliant, and arch, and playful; she had caressed Lucy, and admired Caroline, but without *effect;* and there was a certain expression in Mr. Leddenhurst's eye, when she happened to meet it, that did not quite please her. The vexation she really felt suggested a new experiment. Her animation gave place rather suddenly to an air of pensiveness: she was silent and thoughtful; and started when spoken to, as though waked from an interesting revery. Notwithstanding this, conversation went on very briskly, and even became increasingly lively; as she appeared disinclined to converse, she was suffered to be silent

At length Mr. Leddenhurst observed it, and said, 'My dear, cannot we think of any thing that will entertain Miss Palmer?'

'Here is a new botanical work, with colored plates: perhaps you will like to look at it,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst; and the book and the candles were placed before poor Elizabeth, mortified beyond measure to be treated like a child, dull for want of amusement. Her assumed pensiveness now degenerated into real ill humor, which was but ill disguised during the remainder of the evening.

The fresh air sometimes produces a surprising effect in restoring people to their senses: and Elizabeth, when she had taken leave, and walked a few minutes in the wind, began to repent of her behavior. However, they had bade her good night, and repeated their invitation so kindly, that she hoped it had not been particularly observed: and when Emily, who had been too much occupied to remark her friend's disappointment, observed what a pleasant evening they had passed, Elizabeth assented, saying, 'A delightful evening, indeed!'

Happy are they who do not go into company to *perform;* who can think an evening pleasantly spent, that has been unproductive of compliment, and afforded no particular opportunity of displaying the favorite quality, or talent, or acquirement.

There are some unfortunate persons, who seem

to make little other use of conversation than as a means of petty, personal aggrandizement; and who, in consequence of this wretched propensity, little as they suspect it, subject themselves to the contempt or pity of those whose opinions are most valuable.

There is a class of *speechmakers*, who contrive by ingenious allusions, and hints casually dropped, to *let you know* what they feared you might not otherwise find out: they are letting off fireworks; and when it seems all over, and there are only a few pitiful sparks dropping about—off goes another!—*but it never succeeds.* For whether it be — "my uncle's carriage," — or, "my friend the colonel," or "the general," — or, "when I was on the continent," or, "only a *jeu d'esprit* of mine, a very foolish thing,"—or, "Latin? Oh, scarcely a word, I assure you,"—or, "a cousin of mine knows him intimately,"—or, "when I write to Lady so and so,"—or all these one after another—such hints afford a kind of information which is not intended to be conveyed: they prove, not only that her uncle keeps his carriage—that she knows a colonel and a general—that she has been on the continent—that she writes poetry (and foolish things)—that she learns Latin—that her cousin knows a learned man—that she corresponds with Lady so and so; but they show that she is anxious you should *know* it; that *she* considers such things as distinctions; and that they

are to her new or rare, for people seldom boast of that which they have always been accustomed to; and what is worst of all, it must create a suspicion that she has nothing more left to boast of: for she who gives out that she reads Latin, is not likely to conceal her knowledge of Hebrew or Greek; and she who intimates that she writes to Lady A—, would assuredly let you know it, if she had any connexion with Ladies B—, C—, or D—.

But the symptoms of vanity are almost infinitely various: there is no genus comprehending a greater variety of species. The silly girl, vain of her dress and complexion, is really one of the least offensive and most pardonable of all; for in proportion to the value of the thing boasted of, is the meanness of the boast: hence a pedant is more contemptible than a coxcomb.

But whatever particular character it assume, that mind is in miserable bondage, whose happiness is dependent on the opinion, especially on the applause of others. It is a bondage which seems always the concomitant of a general moral imbecility, whether that imbecility be cause or effect.

CHAPTER IV.

EMILY's introduction to her new friends at this period of her life, was a more important circumstance than she was aware of, highly as she felt disposed to value their friendship. Notwithstanding her many good qualities, she was not free from faults: she was sensible, modest, and ingenuous, but she was—*eighteen.*

She lost her mother early; and her father, although desirous to do every thing in his power for the welfare of his only child, was not aware of the best means to promote it. He was a man of business, and it did not occur to him that any thing more was requisite, than to send her for several years to an established school, from whence he expected her to return completely educated. He did not consider that it is often not until the time when young persons leave school, that the real ardour for self-improvement is excited, which it is of so great importance to direct and cultivate.

Girls of entirely common minds take leave of their books, and often of the accomplishments which they have acquired at such a vast expense of money and time, at the conclusion of the last half year; delighted to exchange them for the pleasures from which they had been reluctantly

restrained during the tedious periods from Christmas to Midsummer, and from Midsummer to Christmas. Revelling for a few giddy years in vanity and idleness, they by and by settle in life; and as the vigor and interest of youthfulness subside, sink into those ordinary beings who, with thousands of their kind, eat, drink, and sleep, dress, visit, and die; while young people in whom the spark of intelligence has been enkindled, are exposed to different dangers. Pride, pedantry, romance, and many other evils, according to the accidents of disposition and education, are the frequent consequences of partial and uncorrected cultivation.

Emily's *simplicity* was her grand preservative from many of these perils; and she possessed a native delicacy of taste, which defended her from others. With the choice of all the volumes in the circulating library of a country town, her reading had been tolerably select. When she left school, her father informed her, that 'he did not approve of young girls reading novels:' but he had little hope that the prohibition would be regarded, because he firmly believed that 'young girls *would* read novels.' But in this instance, Emily had less temptation to disobedience than many: from whatever was common, low, or profane, she always shrunk with dislike. Good taste had in some measure supplied the place of good principle; and of all the gifts of nature, that

instinctive *fineness* of feeling is most estimable, of which education itself can but produce an imitation.

Emily read and felt poetry, and lived in its atmosphere: but as none of the beings around her did the same, she shut herself up in her own world of enjoyment; neither desiring to interfere with the pursuits and pleasures of other people, nor wishing them to participate in hers. She loved her father tenderly, and was obedient and attentive to him: but he was so wholly incapable of entering into her feelings concerning those things which she thought most interesting, that she never attempted to address him in a language which she knew would have been quite unintelligible: while he, satisfied with her cheerful looks and dutiful conduct, dreamed not of the ideal world his daughter inhabited. He studied to make her happy by supplying her with all the comforts and pleasures his circumstances would allow: but it was not for these things that Emily felt most obliged to her father. Having never known the want of a constant supply of those daily comforts, which are as really necessary to the intellectual as to the unrefined, she had not learned to value them. It was the liberty she enjoyed to pursue her *own* pleasures—the luxury of being alone—the inestimable privilege of not being obliged to talk, &c. that inspired her with gratitude, and made her think him the best and

kindest of fathers. And indeed this gratitude was not misplaced: for that sort of kindness, which allows the object of it, as far as possible, to pursue its *own* plan of happiness, is that alone which makes the difference between *gratitude* and *thanks*. It is but a selfish kind of generosity to load persons with favors they do not value, and thwart them in the very point on which *their* pleasure depends.

There was one standing trial of Emily's good-nature; this was, that her father expected her to read the newspaper to him every day after dinner. The sight of the newspaper was disagreeable to her; and politics were worse than uninteresting: however, she thought of Milton's daughters, and made the daily sacrifice with a good grace; and by degrees attained so great a proficiency in the art of reading and carrying on her own train of thought at the same time, that it became less burdensome. The kind 'thank ye, dear,' with which her father always repaid her when she finished her task, reproached her more than any thing, if she had performed it with reluctance.

The company of 'uninteresting people,' as Emily secretly styled the whole circle of her acquaintance, would have been grievously burdensome but for this habit of abstraction, which enabled her to take some apparent share in conversation, and to enjoy her own delicious musings at the same time. It could not, however, escape

the observation of her friends, that her own contemplations seemed more agreeable to her than their company; and she had sometimes been called proud: but it was not by those who knew her; those who had opportunities of witnessing her invariable sweetness and good-nature, and the obliging alacrity with which, when once roused from a revery, she would do any thing, for any body; though it sometimes happened that her services were required before her attention was excited.

Notwithstanding this indifference towards most of those she had hitherto known, Emily had very sublime notions about friendship; and from her first conversation with Miss Weston, she believed she had found that, concerning which, as yet, she had only speculated. Her heart soon glowed and expanded with affection and respect towards the whole family at Stokely. Although the acquaintance was so recent, she felt more at home there than in the circle of her old associates; for she was with beings who understood her—to whom she could express her feelings without the dread of being stared at for eccentricity. Not that her new friends by any means coincided in all Emily's feelings and opinions: but they were not misinterpreted, nor ridiculed; and when corrected, it was with a tenderness and reasonableness that made her quite sure she had been in the wrong.

But it was not likely that a girl of Emily's age and disposition should love such friends as the Leddenhursts — especially as they were new friends — with entire sobriety and moderation. In comparison with them, every body appeared uninteresting and insignificant: and every thing belonging to Stokely appeared to her to possess some peculiar excellence, incommunicable to any other place or thing. The children seemed more lively and engaging than all other children; the flowers more fragrant; the trees more picturesque.

When she walked out with her father, she always pleaded to go that road, or at least some walk where the house was in view: and it was a sort of pleasure if they happened to meet even a greyhound belonging to Stokely. For on such an occasion—perhaps after she had been wondering that her father should seem so much interested in what he was talking about—she would exclaim with sudden animation, 'There 's Leopard! —pretty fellow!—see, papa, is not he a graceful creature?'—and be disappointed that her father appeared so little interested by the interview. But when once affection, however well placed, exceeds the bounds of reason, it becomes a source of at least as much torment as delight. They who live on imaginary pleasures, must expect a balance of *real* pain. Emily did not expect, and she thought she did not even wish, for an *equal*

return of affection from these friends; but she was too anxious about it: and although they gave the most substantial proofs of their regard for her, she tormented herself when any little expression of it was accidentally withheld. It is not until persons enter upon the realities of life, that they learn to distinguish between what is essential and what is trifling, in friendship, as well as other things; and Emily had this and many other lessons to learn, which are never effectually taught but by experience. She possessed, however, a certain nobleness of temper, which prevented her from feeling jealous of Elizabeth. If ever she detected in herself a tendency to that meanness, she instantly discarded it, and thought, 'Is not she my *friend*?'

As Emily became better acquainted with them, she saw and heard many things at Stokely that surprised, and even disappointed her. Mr. Leddenhurst, for instance, appeared really interested about politics, or rather public affairs: and Mrs. Leddenhurst engaged in her domestic concerns, not so much as matters of dry duty as Emily had generally considered them.

She observed, too, that they entered into conversation with their guests, with a degree of interest that exceeded, she thought, the requirements of politeness; instead of practising that dexterous conciseness of reply, which brings a

tiresome subject to the quickest possible termination.

But what surprised her most of all, and occasioned her the most pain, was a confession one day, from Miss Weston, that she was by no means devoted to poetry. She felt no higher delight in it than every cultivated mind must derive from the productions of the best poets: and she assured Emily, that she had more satisfaction in reading works addressed to the understanding, than in the finest productions of imagination.

Observing that her young friend looked disappointed, she added: 'But, Emily, you must not suppose that I despise or undervalue the taste in others, because I do not possess it myself. I not only tolerate, but I admire it, where it is correct, and does not stand in the place of better things.'

'But yet,' said Emily, 'I wish you felt exactly as I do about it.'

Now Emily possessed more genuine poetical taste than many who talk a great deal about poetry. It was not the fashionable admiration of the poem or poet of the day; nor the pedantic taste of the classic, or the critic; nor the indiscriminating rapture of youthful enthusiasm; but she had an eye to see, a heart to feel, and taste to select, the *truly* poetical, not only in books—but in nature, in life, in sentiment.

She did not often yield to the temptation of

scribbling: when she did, it was to express and gratify some feeling of the moment; not to show about among her acquaintance, nor to send to a magazine or a newspaper. She was quite convinced that her own compositions were juvenile at best, and far inferior to the productions of poets that she did not greatly admire. This was one instance in which her good taste proved of essential service to her: it saved her from the unhappy mistake of those, who perceive no difference between writing *verses*, and writing *poetry*; and who accordingly go on writing verses, as many as you please—or more: which is an art as easy of attainment as that of doing cobble-stitch, or making patchwork, or painting sprigs on a thread-paper.

They were just entering on a disquisition upon poetical taste, when a morning call interrupted the conversation. It was Miss Oliver; one of the standing inhabitants of the town.

She belonged to a class of ladies, of whom it may be said, that they are *good for nothing but to be married.* Let no intellectual *Cœlebs* object to the expression; it is not intended to recommend her to *him.*

At eighteen she was tolerably pretty; and about as lively as mere youth will make those who have no native spring of vivacity. Her education, like her mind, was common. If she had married, she might have performed the ordinary offices of domestic life as well as they are ordinarily per-

formed. Though she had not cared much for her husband, she would probably have loved her children; and the maternal duties and affections of themselves impart a degree of interest to any character. But she did not marry, although trained to consider marriage as the grand object at which she was to aim.

Year after year passed away; during which, her attendance at the Christmas rout, the Easter ball, the summer races, was tiresomely punctual. At length it became necessary, by extra attention to dress, and studious vivacity, to show that she was still young; but even that time was gone by, and she now only labored to prove that she was not *old*. Disappointment, and the discontent occasioned by the want of an *object* in life, had drawn lines in her face which time might still have spared. It sunk down into dismal vacuity after every effort at sprightliness; for without mind enough to be pensive, she was habitually dull.

Her circumstances did not allow her the relief of frequenting places of fashionable resort; she contrived to exist with no other air, and no better water, than were to be obtained in her native parish. The few families in the neighborhood with whom, in her youthful days, she used to spend her Christmas or her Whitsuntide were dead, or dispersed, or the acquaintance was broken off: so that the routs and card-parties of this little town were the only relief to her monotony;

where she went to meet the same faces, and to say and hear the same *nothings* as ever.

It was no wonder, therefore, that the veriest trifle—a new stitch, or a new pattern—became to her an affair of importance; that the gossip of the neighborhood seemed essential to her existence; and that, without malignity, scandal should become an entertainment, and mischief a recreation.

Having conversed for a short time with Mrs. Leddenhurst, in a strain of *commonness* that forbade the supposition of an original thought having ever by any accident strayed into her brain, she took leave. As Mr. Leddenhurst shut the door after her, Emily was greatly surprised to hear him say, 'Every human being is interesting.' Thinking her, and most other human beings, uninteresting, she could not understand this at all: but to Mr. Leddenhurst, who was an observer of human nature, and studied it as the most important and interesting of sciences, every specimen was valuable, for every specimen presents *some* shade of variety. But there was a still higher interest which the meanest of his fellow-creatures did not fail to excite. Christian benevolence was with him an active principle; and the earnest desire of doing good led him to seek and cultivate the society of those, whom the pride of intellect, or the selfish indulgences of taste, would have taught him only to shun.

'What an alteration,' said he, 'an interest in religion would make in such a countenance as that lady's!'

Nor was it uncharitable of him to apprehend that she was one of the *many* who pay no decided regard to it. There is a *vulgar cant* belonging to people of the world, which as effectually betrays *their* fraternity, as any peculiar phraseology called *religious cant* can do.

'I never remember,' continued Mr. Leddenhurst, 'observing such an expression of listless vacuity in the face of the meanest Christian. Habitual thoughts of God, and of eternity, *will* impress *some* trace of mind upon the countenance. What a new world of hope and happiness might be opened to such a character! Caroline, let us cultivate her acquaintance.'

CHAPTER V.

ELIZABETH and Emily accepted, with apparently equal eagerness, the offer of their friends at Stokely, to assist them in their course of study and self-improvement. They had free access to Mr. Leddenhurst's ample library, and the advantage of his advice to direct their choice of books. The course of reading recommended to Emily was calculated to inspire her with a taste for solid acquirements, and general information: and to correct, without impairing, the liveliness of her fancy, and the originality of her mind.

They found it more difficult to ascertain what plan of study was most congenial to Elizabeth's taste, or most likely to improve it. The pleasure she took in reading, or in any kind of study, for *its own sake*, was but small. It was less, perhaps, than she was herself aware of; because she was not accustomed to analyze her motives; and she might possibly mistake the avidity with which she often sat down to read a book in the morning, which she intended to talk about in the evening, for the pure love of knowledge, or the gratification of genuine taste.

How many books Elizabeth would have read, and how many things she would have learned, if

she had been *Robinson Crusoe*, she never inquired.

A very superficial kind of knowledge had been hitherto sufficient to answer all the purposes to which she applied it; but now that she was associating with persons who possessed, and evidently valued, more substantial acquisitions, she began to apply herself to them with avidity: for Elizabeth could accommodate herself to the different manners, tastes, and opinions of different people—which she possessed some sagacity in discovering—in a way truly astonishing to simple beholders.

There was now nothing so dry, so difficult, or so wholly foreign to her real taste, which she would not have set herself about if it had been recommended at Stokely, or if Emily had been going to apply to it.

What a pity that so much labor should be lost! — lost, not only with respect to the particular end aimed at, but as to any *sterling* advantage to her own mind; and her new friends were pained to perceive, that with all her laborious efforts to obtain it, she missed the only method of gaining solid approbation. They did not, indeed, wish to discourage her in the pains she was willing to take; but above all they would have been pleased to see her aiming to extirpate the radical evil; and becoming simple, honest, unobtrusive, and in *earnest*.

Elizabeth's studies were interrupted one morning, by revolving a scheme, which was suggested to her by something she heard Mrs. Leddenhurst say the evening before, about establishing a Sunday school for the poor children of Broadisham; and as soon as she had breakfasted, she stepped into the disorderly cottage of a neighbouring cobbler, who had seven or eight dirty children that were always either playing or fighting in the street, and, to the great surprise of the whole family, she offered to teach them all to read.

At first they did not seem to understand her; and when they did, they appeared less struck with her generosity than she had expected. The father went on with his work, with a proud sullen countenance. The mother grinned stupidly; and said, 'I don't know as they'll choose to *larn*. Bill boy—oo'll ye like to *larn* to read?—Sal, do ye hear—oo'll you choose to *larn* to read, child?'

Bill said 'no'—Sal said 'yes:' while Elizabeth, indignant at their rudeness and ingratitude, would have left them to their ignorance; but recollecting her object, she condescended to expostulate, representing the importance of the acquisition; and 'You know,' said she, 'you cannot get them taught for less than twopence a week any where in the town, and I tell you, I will teach them all for nothing.'

Finding, however, that she made no impression on the parents, she turned to the children, saying,

'Well, if you 'll come and let me teach you to read, I will give you all a halfpenny apiece every Sunday morning.'

These words, 'a halfpenny apiece,' were the only ones the children seemed to understand.

'I'll come if you like,' said one of them: 'and so'll I,' 'and so'll I,' said some of the others. So in consequence of her liberal promise, she had four or five dirty scholars the next Sunday morning.

But while the children were thinking of their halfpenny, and Elizabeth of her reputation, A, B, C, was a dull subject to both parties.

'B, I tell you, you stupid little creature!' said she, again and again; but at last her scholars were dismissed, with scarce any other notion about A, B, and C, than that there was some connexion between them and a halfpenny.

The very next day, as Elizabeth was walking with Miss Weston and Emily, they met a party of young ladies, who asked Elizabeth what made her 'so uncommonly late at church yesterday morning?'

'Why, I was detained rather longer than I intended by my little scholars,' said she.

'Scholars!' said Emily.

'What scholars have you?' said Miss Weston.

'Only a few poor children, that I teach to read on Sundays,' answered Elizabeth, carelessly.

'Indeed! I am pleased to hear that: I did not know there was any one here who—indeed I am *very* much pleased to hear it,' said Miss Weston; and as she spoke, she looked at Elizabeth with such an expression of approbation as she was not accustomed to receive.

For Miss Weston's was a charity that not only 'hoped all things,' but '*believed* all things' in a wider sense than would have been possible, had she possessed a little more intuitive perception of character. But it was not

"*Her* nature's plague to spy into abuses."

Herself perfectly upright and sincere, any species of dissimulation appeared to her almost impossible; and the actual discovery of artifice, at which the malignant would be gratified, and the sarcastic amused, filled her only with grief and pity.

That evening Elizabeth was invited to Stokely, to assist in forming a plan for a Sunday school

'We have certainly injured poor Elizabeth,' said Miss Weston, when she mentioned the circumstance to Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst. 'Not that I should think so much of her having raised a little school of her own when no one else had thought of it, but she has never told us, never boasted of it, even when we were speaking on the subject, Emily herself did not know of it.'

'I am surprised at that,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst.

As soon as Elizabeth arrived, they began consulting about the school.

'We have no wish, Elizabeth,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst, 'to interfere with your arrangements; as you were the first to begin, we shall be quite contented to follow you. What plan, my dear, have you pursued with your scholars hitherto?'

'Oh,' said Elizabeth, coloring, 'I have no very particular plan; I hear them read, you know —and so forth: but I am sure you and Miss Weston understand these things much better than I do.'

Mrs. Leddenhurst then described some of the arrangements and methods of teaching which had proved successful in schools she had formerly been engaged in; and as they entirely met Elizabeth's approbation, it was determined to proceed without delay.

A convenient room was provided in the middle of the town; and Elizabeth and Emily, with a few other young people, undertook to attend regularly, twice every Sunday. The poor families around were not all so insensible of the privilege as Elizabeth's cobbler; for a school of fifty children was presently raised, and the numbers increased continually. More teachers were soon wanted; but of all the ladies who were applied

to, few were found willing to lend a helping hand. Many were too indolent; and others were afraid of having any thing to do with what they thought a *methodistical* concern. There were some who appeared very eager in it at first; but as soon as the novelty was over, they became irregular in their attendance, and dropped off, one by one: for to submit to the self-denial and exertion requisite to a regular and persevering attendance at a Sunday school, requires, in general, some stronger motive than mere caprice; although many motives beside the *right* one may be strong enough.

In this exigence, they gladly accepted the assistance of two or three young women of a lower class, who came forward to offer their services. They appeared quite competent to the undertaking, having been formerly engaged in a small Sunday school, which fell off for want of the means to support it.

One of these, well known by the name of 'Betsy Pryke,' was a person of some repute among her friends and acquaintance.

She was a sharp, neat, compact, conceited looking person, who kept a little haberdasher's shop in the market-place. By the aid of some quickness, a good memory, and what was called *a great taste for reading*, she had accumulated a curious mass of heterogeneous lore, with which she was accustomed to astonish, if not to edify,

her simple neighbors. She was particularly fond of hard names, and words of many syllables; and her conversation was frequently enterspersed with quotations from Young, Hervey, and Mrs. Rowe.

Her customers, in addition to their purchase, were generally favored with a little learning, gratis, while she was weighing the pins or measuring the tape; and even before those whom she could not venture to entertain with familiar discourse, some fine word, or *knowing* remark, was dexterously dropped, to let them know *what she was;* and her behavior to this class of her customers was marked by that mixture of pertness and servility, which is commonly produced by self-conceit in dependent circumstances.

To these qualifications, Miss Pryke added a flaming profession of religion. She was one of the very few inhabitants of this town who appeared to pay any serious regard to it; and among those pious, simple people, who possessed little of the wisdom or knowledge of this world, she passed for a pattern of zeal and sanctity. Miss Pryke's creed was all *creed:* she was fond of *holding argumentations* upon a few points on which she considered herself to have attained more *light* than the generality of plain Christians. She appeared to take little interest in the practical parts of Christianity, about which there is no controversy; and upon those who made any thing more than a distant or casual reference to these sub-

jects, she readily bestowed her enlightened pity. They were 'persons in the dark;' and if they were ministers, they were 'blind leaders of the blind,' and knew nothing of the *gospel*. She valued *comfort* much above consistency, and was more observant of her *frames* than of her temper.

She could quote Scripture with great facility; but was fonder of hearing it *allegorized* than explained. She had by rote the whole string of those phrases, and particular modes of expression, which pass current among some good people, and which, although frequently used with the utmost sincerity, are very far from being evidences of it.

Susannah Davy was a person of a very different description: she was an humble, serious, and superior young woman.

Her father was an alehouse-keeper, a profane, violent man; he scoffed at religion, and had treated his daughter with great severity since she became acquainted with its value. But she submitted to his harsh treatment with patience and meekness, and conducted herself in his riotous house with such strict propriety, that she was respected by the lowest who frequented it.

Whenever she could be spared from the business below, she took refuge from the disorderly company in the kitchen, in her quiet chamber; where, with her Bible, and a very few good books, she passed many a tranquil and happy hour.

She had a pleasing, intelligent face; and

while her manners were perfectly unassuming, there was a dignified reserve in her deportment. Her dress was neat and plain. She had that nice sense of propriety, which secured her from the vulgarity of dressing beyond her station.

She showed that she respected *herself*, by her uniformly respectful behavior towards her superiors; and the circumstance of the ladies she was now introduced to being her fellow Christians, did not dispose her to forget what was due to them. She had read, that superiors are 'not to be despised because they are *brethren*:' and she felt no inclination to practise that unbecoming familiarity, which in some instances has proved a hindrance to profitable Christian intercourse between the brother of high and of low degree.

The fault, however, is not always on one side; there is a *manner* in which some good and very charitable people behave towards their inferiors in rank, which must be grating to those who retain any independence of mind.

It was not thus with the Leddenhursts: they always remembered and respected the *natural* rights of the poor: those rights which belong to them in common with the rich; and which, in so many essential respects, place all the ranks of mankind upon an equality. They considered their services as voluntary, their dwellings as sacred, and above all, their minds as free as their own.

There were few families more beloved, and more justly, by their poor neighbors, than the Leddenhursts; and few, perhaps, whose intercourse with their needy tenantry was so entirely free from the debasing spirit of *feudalism* — that spirit which has so long survived the system. They were the friends of the poor, without calling themselves, or wishing to be called, such names as patrons, benefactors, and the like. Their offices of charity were never performed with that superlative *condescendingness* of tone and manner, which, though it may be thought excessively amiable, is but a creditable way of being proud; and which does, in fact, neither become nor belong to one being, in its transactions with another of the same species. Nor were their religious instructions and advice given with an air of persons invested with the authority of Church and State. They always used to *reason*, as well as to exhort; and to reason *first*. They well knew that authority can no more bind *opinion*, than chains can bind sunbeams.

They took particular care to instil proper notions on this subject into the minds of their children; that when they were going about on little errands of kindness to their cottages, they might not fancy themselves such condescending little cherubs as some foolish people might call them. They were told that a child *cannot* condescend to a grown person: and the little Leddenhursts

were remarked for their modest, respectful behavior to servants, and to the poor. Nor were they ever encouraged in any thing that might make their charities look *picturesque:* for their parents were aware, that with every possible precaution, it is difficult enough to prevent a frightful mixture of motives in the performance of any good work.

But all this time Susannah Davy is waiting to speak to Mrs. Leddenhurst. Her appearance very much prepossessed them in her favor; and they accepted the offer of her services with still more readiness than that of her sagacious friend. They both, however, seemed well qualified for the employment; and Elizabeth and Emily, to whom such engagements were entirely new, appeared at first, in comparison with them, to some disadvantage as teachers of a Sunday school.

Indeed they both experienced some disappointment in this concern. In *itself* it was wholly uninteresting to Elizabeth: for what is there in a row of poor children, to interest a vain, selfish mind? and she found it more unproductive in other respects than she had expected. Although she would lose a great deal by withdrawing her attendance, there was but little to be gained by continuing it. She was but one of a number, undistinguished among the other teachers, who were too busy with their own classes to observe Elizabeth's attention to hers.

Emily's disappointment was of a different kind: she had surveyed the form of children allotted to her—which consisted of the usual proportion of the stupid, the brisk, the idle, the diligent, and the froward—with sanguine expectations of what instruction would do for them; not calculating on the dull comprehensions, feeble powers, or perverse dispositions of the little beings she had to deal with. She soon discovered that the pleasant reward of immediate or certain success was not that which could be depended upon; and Miss Weston told her, that the only way not to feel discouraged, was to be contented with the satisfaction of *endeavoring* to do good to our fellow creatures. She knew better than Emily what consequences to expect from such exertions; and was contented to perceive, that the children were tolerably regular in their attendance; that they made a real, though slow progress in their learning; and that they gradually became more decent and orderly in their appearance and behavior.

It struck Miss Weston, that the new teacher, Miss Pryke, regarded her friends Elizabeth and Emily with an evil eye. Some hints she occasionally dropped, confirmed this suspicion: but she had not given her an opportunity to explain herself fully, having rather avoided entering into conversation with Miss Pryke. Her manner of talking, especially upon religious subjects, was

not agreeable to Miss Weston. She had much greater pleasure in conversing with Susannah Davy. The poor in this world are often 'rich in faith;' and many a lesson of patience, trust, and cheerful suffering, may be learned from their 'simple annals.' When this pious, humble girl told of the peace and happiness she enjoyed during her hours of retirement, even in the midst of hardships and insults, Miss Weston felt that if her own sorrows were more refined, her consolations were not more elevated.

The truth was, that Miss Pryke was not very well pleased to find Elizabeth and Emily in office at the school. She knew that they had always been numbered among the gay young people of the town; and she augured no good from admitting people of the world to engage in such a service. Miss Pryke's notions concerning this phrase, 'people of the world,' were neither liberal nor correct. It is a phrase which cannot be particularly attached to wealth or station: nor is there any condition of life, any creed, or party, from which it must necessarily be excluded. They who love God supremely, and serve Him faithfully, are *not* of the world: they who prefer any thing before Him, *are* of the world; though they may 'call him Lord,' and 'prophesy in his name.' And it is of little consequence, whether the worldly mind be seeking its gratification from

a display of dress and beauty in the glitter of a ball-room, or from a display of its *gifts* among a few poor brethren at a prayer meeting: each is loving 'the praise of men more than the praise of God.' But this was not the view of the subject that Miss Pryke was accustomed to take. With the exception of herself, and a few of her friends, she considered all the inhabitants of Broadisham, especially those of the higher class, emphatically, '*the world.*' And however true this appeared to be with respect to the majority, her charity would never stretch so far as to allow, no, nor to hope, that there might be *some* among them, who, humbled at heart, and essentially relying on their *unhonored* Saviour, might grope their way to heaven, through all the rubbish of ignorance, error, and pharisaic prejudice, which worldly connexions, and unfaithful instructions, must throw in their way. But 'God seeth not as man seeth.'

One day, when Mrs. Leddenhurst and Miss Weston remained after the school was dismissed, to make some arrangements in the room, Miss Pryke seized the opportunity she had been wishing for. Mrs. Leddenhurst remarked that the children were making as much progress as could be expected.

'Yes, certainly, ma'am,' said Miss Pryke, 'as it respects their temporal instruction; but for my

part,' added she, sighing, 'I could have wished to see the work prospering in our hands in a different way to what it does: it would be a great encouragement to my mind, I must say, to see some of these dear children enlightened.'

'We are not to expect miracles,' answered Mrs. Leddenhurst; 'there are very few of them who can read their Bibles at present.'

'Oh,' replied Miss Pryke, 'we must have faith, and nothing will be impossible; but if I may speak my sentiments, Mrs. Leddenhurst,' said she — now resolving to cast off the fear of man — 'I do not wonder that our labors are not blessed; and I don't believe they ever will be while we have so many people of the world amongst us. What can be expected from such poor, dear, deluded, young creatures! and what an example to set before these dear children, Mrs. Leddenhurst!'

Here Susannah Davy ventured to remark, that 'perhaps their attendance at the school might be made useful to the young ladies; she had heard of such instances, and thought it would be a great pity to discourage them.'

To this Mrs. Leddenhurst assented; and observed, that 'so far from disapproving of their assistance, she lamented that no other ladies had joined them: she knew not by what authority they should be justified in forbidding any, who were

willing to unite in a good work.' And silenced, but not satisfied, Miss Pryke, by adding, that 'there was nothing in the character or conduct of these ladies that, in her opinion, disqualified them for the task they were at present required to perform.'

The conversation ended here; for Miss Pryke was not the kind of person with whom they chose to enter into a further debate. She could not, however, be more truly concerned for the religious welfare of the children than they were. The grand object of all their exertions, and of which they never lost sight, was to train them for heaven; and they steadily pursued those methods, which, in their opinions, were most likely to promote this end. They did not attempt to feed them with 'strong meat,' but with 'milk,' because they were 'babes;' and communicated the simple ideas they could comprehend, in plain language, and short sentences, such as they might easily attend to, and remember. They knew that most children will not listen to a long discourse, however excellent; but that their attention may be excited by a short, striking, personal address.

Such slow and simple methods did not satisfy Miss Pryke's zeal for the conversion of her pupils. Not considering the *usual* course of divine proceeding in spiritual, as well as in natural

things, she expected to sow and reap at the same time: but instances of Sunday school children's appearing seriously impressed are rare, and, generally speaking, doubtful; though there have been hopeful exceptions. At any rate, teachers may be satisfied with imparting that knowledge, and forming those habits, which are so frequently followed, in after life, by the divine blessing.

CHAPTER VI.

In the meantime Emily's friends witnessed with great pleasure the hopeful, though gradual change that appeared to be taking place in her mind. These friends could make allowances for the prejudices of education, the influence of early habits, and the various disadvantages which must attend the dawnings of religion in those who have not been taught to fear God from their youth.

They were pleased to observe in her a delicacy of conscience which made her extremely guarded in conversing on the subject, lest she should be led to express more than she felt. Without sincerity she saw that religion is but a name, and without earnestness, a shadow.

As soon as she began reading the Bible with attention and prayer, she perceived that she had never before read it to purpose. She was surprised that she had often passed over the same passages which now struck her so forcibly, with such total inattention to their obvious meaning. She began to feel that 'one thing is needful;' that the grand business of life, and that to which all others must be secondary, is to prepare for the life to come. Of the necessity and nature of this preparation she became increasingly conscious the more she thought of God, and of the

nature of heavenly happiness. She was convinced that 'His presence could not be fulness of joy' to any but those who are, like Him, holy and spiritual. When she compared the state of mind which the Scriptures call 'meetness for heaven' with the vanity and earthliness of her present taste and pleasures, and with the distaste she felt to those that are wholly spiritual, she began to understand what is meant by being 'born again;' and to feel the necessity of it, although her ideas of the way in which this change must be produced were still indistinct and uncertain.

She had bowed at the name of Jesus, and spoken of Him, and heard Him spoken of as 'our Saviour,' and 'our blessed Saviour;' but with notions the most vague, and feelings the most indifferent. But when she began to regard Him as a Saviour from sin and misery, as the Friend of *sinners*, a living and present Friend, and to hope that He might be hers—His being and His character appeared an astonishing reality, and it seemed to her as though she had never heard of Him before.

At first Emily set about becoming a Christian with the same expectation of success, as she would have applied herself to a language or a science. She saw that she had it all to learn, and she thought there was nothing to be done but to learn it. She soon, however, began to

experience some of the difficulties which will be encountered by all who are in *earnest*. She was sincerely asking, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?' But, like him who once 'went away sorrowful,' Emily found herself unwilling to make that entire surrender of the heart to God which He requires, and without which religion is but an irksome bondage, a fruitless effort to compromise between God and the world. She complained of a secret reluctance and disinclination to serious thought and engagements, and of a disproportionate interest in her own pursuits and pleasures. She sometimes expressed a fear to Miss Weston, that her solicitude about religion arose more from a dread of the consequences of neglecting it, than from a desire towards it for its own sake.

To these complaints her friend listened with sympathy, and administered such encouragements as were calculated, not to make her easy and satisfied with her present attainments, but to stimulate her to perseverance and diligence. She explained to her that these or similar obstacles ever oppose the entrance of real religion to the human heart; that all are naturally indisposed to embrace it; but that those who feel and lament this indisposition have every encouragement to expect assistance.

'Strength,' said she, 'is promised to those, and those only, who are sensible of weakness;

who, acknowledging with deep humility and poverty of spirit their mental impotence, are willing to receive help of God.'

'That change of heart which consists in new dispositions and affections, new pursuits and pleasures, new apprehensions of things unseen, and without which heaven could not be happiness, is,' she said, 'the immediate operation of the Spirit of God. It is that for which of ourselves we are absolutely insufficient. We must not, however,' continued Miss Weston, 'expect this assistance, unless we earnestly and constantly seek it: '*Ask*, and ye shall receive;' this is the invariable condition. And, Emily, we must watch as well as pray; and diligently use every means that God has appointed for the promotion of religion in the soul; never relaxing from that strict system of mental discipline in which Christian self-denial chiefly consists. It is to those who *do* the will of God that the promise is offered.'

While Miss Weston was thus continually performing the noblest offices of human friendship, Emily's love for her became increasingly ardent; for she assumed no authority nor superiority in advising her: her manner was so humble and affectionate, and displayed at once such a delicate consideration of her feelings, and anxious solicitude for her happiness, that Emily's heart melted with grateful affection.

It has been said that there was nothing so dry,

so difficult, nor so *wholly foreign to her real inclinations*, that Elizabeth would not have set herself about, if it has been recommended — or rather, likely to recommend *her* at Stokely. It was therefore less surprising — as religion was the one thing most attended to and valued there, that Elizabeth must now also become religious, or at least appear to be so.

Without premeditated and consummate hypocrisy, yet without sincerity, and wholly without earnestness, she professed to view the subject in a new light, and requested instruction upon it. She readily, and without gainsaying, acquiesced in new opinions: to many she might have appeared a more hopeful learner than Emily. But surely there can be no bondage so irksome, no drudgery so base, as counterfeiting, or from any mistake falling short of that character which, when genuine, brings with it freedom and independence, pleasantness and peace.

Although they found it a difficult task to converse on the subject with Elizabeth, no pains were spared to give her right views, and to excite in her mind a real concern about it. She assented readily to every thing that was said; believed whatever was stated; felt all that was described — and more; but they could not feel satisfied with her professions.

Indeed, the manner in which the Christian character was described and exemplified at Stoke-

ly, rendered it so difficult of imitation—there was so little credit to be gained by mere outward appearances or particular expressions; while so much stress was laid upon sincerity, humility, and spirituality of mind, that Elizabeth soon began to feel the support of her new professions almost intolerably irksome, and almost hopelessly difficult: perhaps she might have abandoned the attempt altogether, if she had not accidentally discovered a style of religious profession far easier of attainment.

Miss Pryke was confirmed in her suspicions of the unsoundness of the new family by what had lately passed, and she attended the next Sunday, determined to make redoubled efforts at enlightening the school. The instructions she addressed to the children were indeed principally aimed at the teachers; and Elizabeth's form being next to Miss Pryke's, she could not avoid hearing a great deal of it. She listened to her harangue, partly from curiosity, and partly from a desire of becoming familiar with a language which she wished to adopt. Perceiving from the whole strain of it that it would be comparatively easy to be very religious after Miss Pryke's manner, she determined to gain the notice and good opinion of this enlightened teacher. So, as soon as the school was dismissed, Elizabeth made up to Miss Pryke, and shaking her by the hand, with a particular kind of smile, said, 'I am

sure I have reason to thank you for what I have heard this morning.'

Miss Pryke started at this very unexpected address: however, it put her prejudices to flight in an instant. Notwithstanding her jealousy of the gay or genteel, she was doubly gratified at having proselyted one of this class. Her answer was studiously seasoned with *spiritual flattery:* but that and the succeeding conversation are not recorded, because it would be painful, and equally offensive to right feeling and good taste, to repeat a discourse in which expressions might occur, which to use professedly in earnest, but without sincerity and reverence, is the worst kind of profaneness.

The conversation was renewed in the afternoon, and on the following Sunday: and Elizabeth was invited to join a private meeting which was held once a week in Miss Pryke's parlour. She felt rather ashamed of accepting this invitation, and scarcely knew why she wished it; however, as it was winter, she stole in one evening.

Her entrance seemed for a time to distract the devotions of the little assembly, the appearance of a gay lady was so very unusual among them. There was some bustle in dumb show, to make way for, and accommodate her; and she was beckoned and jostled, and pointed and pushed to the vacant arm-chair by the fireside: but Eliza-

beth with gracious bows declined this distinction, and seated herself—for she was fond of contrast—on one of the forms, between a very old woman, and a spare squalid looking man, whose head was tied up with a blue handkerchief. Elizabeth's lace veil floated on his shabby shoulder, and her rich India shawl spread over the old woman's red cloak, who shook it off respectfully; while the good man squeezed himself up to his narrowest compass, and drove at his next neighbor to make more room.

When the service was over, Miss Pryke made up to Elizabeth and shook hands with her; and so did two or three others, saying a word or two expressive of their pleasure at seeing her there: and there were some present whose hearts glowed with true Christian benevolence when they did so.

CHAPTER VII.

By this time Emily, without having studied for it, had gained the love and esteem of the whole family at Stokely. Elizabeth saw that she had: and notwithstanding their impartial attentions—for none but the children *appeared* the fondest of Emily—Elizabeth perceived that she was not loved, esteemed, and, what to her was still worse, not *admired* so much. It was a long time before she could believe this; but when she did, when she felt quite sure of it, her mortification began to produce a degree of indifference to their opinion, and distaste to their company; and she wondered why she had taken so much pains to please them.

From this time her visits to Stokely became gradually less frequent; and as she felt Emily to be no longer a foil, but a rival, her company also became irksome to her; and although her professions when they met were the same as ever, Emily was hurt to perceive that Elizabeth shunned her society.

Her connexion with Miss Pryke tended much to promote this coolness; for it gave Elizabeth another object and other engagements; and such as were not very compatible with her intercourse

with the Leddenhursts. She continued to attend the weekly meeting at Miss Pryke's; for vanity is seldom dainty—and the notice she attracted, and the distinction she obtained even *there*, were agreeable to her. Her manners, her accomplishments, her dress, excited little attention among persons of her own rank, who could display much the same; but in all these respects she stood unrivalled in Miss Pryke's parlor, and they obtained for her that consideration which she loved.

Well had it been for Elizabeth if she had made as good use of these meetings as many, as most of those did who frequented them. But unfortunately, she only imitated what was not worth imitating. She soon acquired a facility in using the phrases current among these poor people, and even caught something of their particular looks and gestures. These peculiarities, which, while they too easily pass among some as signs of grace, among others, are with as little discrimination concluded to be the symptoms of a canting hypocrisy; but which are, in fact, often, most often, the genuine and natural expressions of earnest sincerity, uncontrolled by the delicacy which teaches the educated to conceal their feelings.

But, truly, the least agreeable excrescences which are produced by earnestness in religion, are more reasonable, and ought to be less offensive, than that finished air of indifference which too often characterizes *politer* worshippers.

When a poor Christian turns the key upon her comfortless dwelling, and sets off with her lantern and her Bible, to spend an hour in thinking and hearing of a place where there will be no more want, it is not surprising if she be more deeply interested and affected than those, who leave a comfortable drawing-room, an intelligent circle, or some interesting pursuit, and whose 'joy unspeakable' it costs them, perhaps, little effort to conceal.

But it is best to avoid *all* extremes; and those good people who are prone to make *such* 'outward and visible signs of their inward and spiritual graces,' would do well to observe the conduct which Jesus Christ seems plainly to recommend on this subject; that decent composure of countenance and manner, which while we are exposed to the eyes of others, answers the purpose of 'entering into the closet, and shutting to the door.' —'Be ye not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast: but anoint thy head, and wash thy face,' &c. — When the repenting publican 'smote upon his breast,' he was not with the throng of worshippers in the Temple, but standing 'afar off.'

Elizabeth, however, found herself in high esteem among this little company, especially with Miss Pryke, by whom she was studiously flat-

tered and extolled. She had little opposition to encounter at home, on account of her new profession; for her parents disliked trouble too much to persecute! and Mrs. Palmer contented herself with exclaiming sometimes, when her daughter was setting off for the market-place—

'Bless me, Elizabeth, how can you make such a fool of yourself!'

Elizabeth's father and mother were people of the world in the most complete sense: they were 'lovers of pleasure, and not lovers of God.'

Mrs. Palmer was clever; and had a vast deal of taste in laying out gardens, and fitting up rooms, and setting out dinners. Her grand object in life was, *to enjoy herself;* and her selfishness was refined, and perfect in its kind. She was a good wife, a kind mother, an obliging neighbor, as far as ever she could be consistently with this object, but no further. She had an easy, pleasing address; and her politeness was so unremittingly attentive, that it looked almost like friendship. Whatever did not demand any real sacrifice of her own pleasure or convenience, was done, and done in the most obliging manner possible; but really to deny herself for the sake of another, was a species of virtue which she left to be practised by such good sort of people as chose it: to her it appeared foolishness; especially as she could decline her services with such masterly

adroitness, with such a gentle, sympathizing address, that the cold selfishness of her heart often escaped detection.

Her feelings were naturally violent: but she had such an extreme dislike of being uncomfortable, that she rarely suffered them to be very troublesome to her. When the news arrived that her only and darling son had died abroad of the yellow fever, many people thought she would not long survive the intelligence. Her sorrow at first was ungovernable. She said she should never have another happy hour: but it is easier to be distracted for a week than to be sorrowful for life; and Mrs. Palmer discovered surprisingly soon, that she was still in possession of all those good things on which her daily pleasure depended. She had no son, it was true; but she had her pleasant house, and handsome furniture; luxurious fare, and a healthy appetite; a fine person, and expensive ornaments. She could still walk, and ride, and visit, and see company; and build her grotto, and attend her green-house, and arrange her cabinet; so that she recovered her cheerfulness rapidly. There was nothing in her mind with which sorrow could *amalgamate*, it was an unwelcome and unintelligible foreigner.

By her son's dying at a distance, she was spared what were, to her, the most shocking circumstances attending such an event.

Death—that one thing which the skeptic *must* believe, and to which the worldly *must* submit—was that which she most disliked to think about; and she studiously avoided whatever was likely to remind her of it. She shrunk from the survey of its gloomy apparatus; and was really glad that all that part of the affair was transacted so far off as Jamaica. The opening of the family vault was a circumstance she particularly dreaded: *that* was a place she did not like to think of; and still less to recollect, that she must *herself*, one day, lie down in that dark chamber. Whenever the unwelcome thought was forced upon her, she instantly recurred to the soundness of her constitution, and the vigorous means she used to preserve it. Besides which, she avoided perils by water and perils by land; was the first to foresee evil and hide herself; and to flee from contagion and every form of danger: thus, by a common but strange kind of deception, feeling as though to delay death were to escape it.

She thought it prudent, however, to make some provision for the distant day; and was, accordingly, constant at church, and charitable to the poor: by which means she concluded all would be safe, whenever she should be under the absolute necessity of going to heaven.

Mr. Palmer was a gentleman of ordinary capacity: but he could hunt, and shoot, and joke,

and swear; and contrived to do very well without thinking: for with these accomplishments, a good table, and well stocked cellar, he wanted neither for friends nor reputation.

It suited the taste both of Mr. and Mrs. Palmer to live expensively; whether it suited their income as well, they did not often inquire: for they avoided every thing that was disagreeable: and to them it was disagreeable to think about debts and prudence.

A short time after Elizabeth had begun to estrange herself from Stokely, Mrs. Leddenhurst received a parcel of books from her, which they had lent her; with a note thanking her for the loan of them, but declining the offer of others that had been proposed; adding, that 'studies of this nature were too apt to encroach upon pursuits of higher importance.'

'This is very true indeed,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst, when she had read the note; 'and I wish Elizabeth may now find herself more disposed to engage in pursuits of higher importance: but I am afraid she is making a mistake; at least I should question whether she will really employ the time she would have spent in reading these books to more advantage. I have known some good people,' continued she, 'who would scruple taking up a volume of elegant literature, or of philosophy or science, alleging, that they had

not the time to spare from better reading; whose consciences would yet allow them to spend months in working a cap or a handkerchief; and who were in the habit of employing themselves in such domestic affairs as, in their circumstances, could be as well done by their servants.'

'Elizabeth has learned this from some of her new friends,' said Mr. Leddenhurst: 'it is no uncommon thing for persons of low education and contracted views to entertain this kind of jealousy against general information. Indeed, most things which their own circumstances will not permit them to enjoy; whatever they have not knowledge to understand, or taste to appreciate, they are apt to consider as inconsistent with real piety.

'Many very good people are subject to this prejudice, and are apt to consider as dangerous symptoms of conformity to the world, pursuits and refinements, which a little more knowledge, and a little more liberality, would convince them, are, in their way and *in their place*, aids and ornaments to Christianity.'

'The opposite extreme is, however, so much the most general and the most abused,' said Miss Weston, 'and this is so much the safest of the two, that one had need be cautious in censuring it. Where one person abstains from general reading for conscience, or rather for prejudice

sake, how many are there who read bad books without any regard to conscience, and who are prejudiced against good ones!'

The Leddenhursts were sorry that Elizabeth had withdrawn herself so much from their society; especially as they did not feel perfectly satisfied with the present style of her professions. They did not, however, venture to form so decided a judgment concerning her as was declared of Emily by some of the good people at Miss Pryke's.

Emily had no ambition to gain their favor; indeed she paid too little regard to public opinion: and her dread and abhorrence of *unfelt* professions led her to avoid those very appearances and expressions which might have induced them to form a more favorable judgment of her piety. They shook their heads at her youthful sprightliness; while Elizabeth was pronounced 'a gracious and growing character.'

CHAPTER VIII.

One spring evening, Elizabeth had taken her accustomed seat by the side of Miss Pryke's counter. While they were talking, she sometimes put aside the shawls and ribands that blinded the window with the end of her parasol, to see what was passing without. But there was nothing to be seen except some children at play in the middle of the square—and Mr. Preston standing in his usual position at his shop door—and old Mr. and Mrs. Parsonson returning from their evening walk—and the setting sun shining on the old market-cross, just as it did a hundred years ago.

It was seldom that any thing happened to disturb the tranquillity of this remote place: except that a show, or a conjuror, or a company of strolling players, sometimes stopped to amuse the inhabitants for a night or two, in their way to the county town. But suddenly their conversation was interrupted by the sound of distant music. Elizabeth started from her seat, exclaiming:

'Hark, Miss Pryke! what can that be? the bass-drum, I declare!'

For now it came nearer and louder; and presently a full band, in gay green and white, playing a lively march, followed by the regiment, and

all the boys and girls of Broadisham, crowded into the market-place.

'How partial I am to military music!' said Elizabeth, as she stood nodding to the tune; while rank after rank passed the shop door.

This was a lively evening for Broadisham: it was all bustle and animation: maids and mistresses, masters and men, appeared at their doors and windows. Trains of soldiers, stooping their tall caps, were seen entering the lowly doors of the Angel, the King's Arms, and the Red Lion; while a party of officers assembled before the gate of the new Hotel.

The teachers of the Sunday school had been employed for some time past in making a set of frocks and tippets for the children, and as soon as it was completed, an evening was appointed for them to meet in the school-room to receive them. This evening being arrived, and the parties assembled, they were about to proceed to business, when Emily proposed waiting a little while for Elizabeth, who was not come; but at last they were obliged to go on without her.

It was a pleasant task to take off the patched, worn, and torn, and fit on these new comfortable dresses. The whole school soon appeared in a neat livery: and while the children in stiff attitudes kept surveying themselves and each other,

and looking almost as much ashamed as they were pleased, the ladies, not less pleased, stood beholding the happy crowd. Emily enjoyed it exceedingly, as with great animation she stood rolling up the old tattered garments, and admiring the new.

It was nearly dark before the children were dismissed; and just as the ladies were coming down stairs, they observed a light dressy figure making her way rather impatiently through the crowd of children that was issuing from the school-room door. Till the moment she passed, when the light from a chemist's shop shone full upon her, they did not discover that it was Elizabeth. Emily spoke to her, but she was looking another way, and appeared not to observe any of the party, who stood gazing at her as she passed swiftly on.

'She is going to this officers' ball,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst; 'there is her mother, I see, just before.'

'I am surprised at that!' said Emily.

'And I am concerned,' said Miss Weston.

'I am concerned, but not much surprised,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst.

'But I have heard her say so much against those amusements lately,' added Emily.

'I should have been more surprised if she had said less,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst; 'but we will not condemn her, perhaps she is going against

her inclinations. I only fear that if she once begin to break through the restraints she has lately imposed upon herself, she will return to these things with increased avidity.'

As they passed the assembly-room they saw the chandeliers were lit up; the dancing had commenced; and they could distinctly hear the sound of the inspiring viol. Emily had trod many a measure there, and she could scarcely forbear stepping to the well-known air. She was really fond of dancing; but the company, the dissipation, were never very agreeable to her. She had declined attending this ball without regret. Mr. and Mrs. Leddenhurst had explained to her their reasons for abstaining from these diversions in a way that convinced her of their propriety. Without shaking their heads, and speaking of dancing as containing in itself some mysterious evil which could not be explained, they simply stated the difficulty, if not impossibility, of preserving that temper of mind in such assemblies which a Christian should *always* maintain; that they were universally allowed to indispose the mind to serious reflection and serious engagements; and to expose young and old to many temptations.

The offence it would inevitably give to many pious people, whose *prejudices* even we are expressly enjoined to consult, was mentioned as

another reason, and a sufficient one, for abstaining, independent of all other considerations.

'And if resigning such paltry pleasures as these,' said Mr. Leddenhurst, 'be considered too great a sacrifice to be made for Christ's sake, what are we to understand by forsaking *all* to follow him? But even,' said he, 'if I could attend these places without any injury to my own mind, or any offence to the minds of others, I really should not feel disposed to go dancing through a world so full of sin and misery as this is.'

Emily, however, needed not many arguments on this subject. When she began to *feel* religion, and to think of eternity, she did not want to dance, nor to mix much with people whose thoughts are all about this world; yet she had never before been so uniformly cheerful as now. She returned to Stokely with her friends, and spent the remainder of the evening so pleasantly with them, that she quite forgot the assembly-room.

How it happened that Elizabeth was at the officers' ball, must now be explained.

One of these officers was an old acquaintance of her father's; and he, with all the others, were invited to dine at his house.

Elizabeth had not quite finished dressing herself for this occasion, when she was called down

stairs to Miss Pryke, who waited to speak with her in the hall.

'I did not hear till just now,' said she, glancing as she spoke at the various parts of Elizabeth's dress, 'I did not hear till this minute, that all these people were coming to dinner here today; and as I was convinced you would not wish to be in the way of it, I came to request the pleasure of your company to spend the day at *our's*, and I hope—'

'Thank you,' said Elizabeth, 'you're extremely good, I 'm sure, and I should enjoy it exceedingly, for, you know, it is excessively distressing to me; but, indeed, I'm afraid I could not get off any how, for, you see, my mother would be so much displeased. So thank you, *good morning*,' said she, withdrawing rather abruptly, and leaving Miss Pryke not quite satisfied with the manner in which her invitation had been declined.

There are ways of being irresistible without *flirting:* and Elizabeth did not find it requisite on the present occasion to throw off entirely the character she had assumed. When she made her appearance, there was a look of childish simplicity and timidity, with a becoming expression of being distressed at the presence of so many gentlemen: hastening to take refuge among the ladies, she seated herself beside Miss Oliver, who was one of the party, with whom she began chatting in an under voice, with playful familiarity.

During dinner the subject of the proposed ball was introduced, and Lieutenant Robinson, a young officer who sat next Elizabeth, began talking about the pleasure of meeting her there. But Elizabeth acknowledged she was not partial to these amusements. 'There was too much publicity in them,' she said, 'to suit *her* taste: she was aware she exposed herself to the imputation of singularity, but, in fact, she preferred pleasures of a more private and domestic kind.' While the lieutenant was expressing his grief, surprise, concern, and astonishment at this declaration, a lady who sat opposite exclaimed,

'Oh, we must not expect to see Miss Palmer at the assembly-room; she has quite forsaken our innocent amusements since she has been such a saint.'

At the word *saint* all the company laughed; laughed rather more than Elizabeth liked, and dreading further exposure, she joined in the laugh, saying,

'Oh, pray indeed, you must not call *me* a saint! I only wish I was more of one than I am.'

'But, Mrs. Palmer, ma'am,' said the lieutenant, appealing to her mother, 'Miss Palmer surely cannot be serious; let me beg of you to intercede with her, that we may have the honor of her company to-morrow evening.'

'I shall certainly endeavor to prevail with Elizabeth,' said her mother.

'There,' said he, 'Mrs. Palmer takes our part; you will not refuse her, I'm convinced?'

'If my *mother* wishes it, certainly not,' replied Elizabeth, with a submissive smile.

Thus she had promised to go to the ball before she recollected her pre-engagement at the school-room; and she could not break her promise; besides which, in the course of this evening Lieutenant Robinson had rendered himself so agreeable, that all prior considerations rapidly gave way.

When she was alone in her room that night, she began to speculate upon the posture of affairs. She thought for a moment of the opinion that would be entertained of her by her friends in the market-place for going to the ball; and she thought for two moments of what would be thought of it at Stokely. But Elizabeth now found herself engaged in business of importance, to which trifles must be sacrificed; and the tide that was plunging her back into a world from which her heart had never been alienated, was but feebly stemmed by principle or conscience.

Elizabeth had probably been deceiving herself as well as others. They who are little accustomed to self-examination, who look more at actions than at motives, may go a great way in false professions without *deliberate* hypocrisy. Perhaps she was herself surprised to find how

easily her scruples were overcome, and her professions laid aside. She felt less dread in doing so, than shame at the idea of their being discovered. Her mind was not indeed at this time in a state for making cool calculations.

Religion, friends, reputation, were hastily thrown into one scale and Lieutenant Robinson's gold epaulette into the other—and thus the point was decided.

CHAPTER IX.

For more than a fortnight after the night of the ball, Elizabeth had not been seen by any of her old friends. At length Emily was surprised by a call from her; and still more, by her proposing to accompany her that evening on a visit to Stokely.

'It is so long since I have been,' said she, 'that they must think me quite inattentive; and if you would like to go this evening, I shall be happy to attend you.'

Emily readily agreed to this unexpected proposal: indeed she was very glad of it; especially as she remarked a certain thoughtfulness and pensiveness in Elizabeth's manner, which made her hope she was sorry for what had lately occurred.

During their walk Elizabeth was unusually silent and absent; and she continued so after their arrival, although she had received the same free and cordial welcome as usual. Many ineffectual efforts were made to enliven her; and at last Mrs. Leddenhurst—who had remarked that Elizabeth liked to be asked to play—proposed that she should sit down to the instrument.

'What shall I play?' said she, turning over

the leaves of the music-book. 'The Soldier's Adieu—that 's a sweet thing! shall I try it?'

'If you please,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst.

Elizabeth played and began to sing; but stopped presently, as though unable to proceed.

'Why don't you sing?' said Emily. 'Do sing!'

'I cannot sing very well this evening,' said she, looking distressed; and added aside to Emily, 'You *must not* ask me to sing *those* words.'

After attempting a few more notes, she stopped again, and leaning back upon Emily, begged for air and water.

The window was thrown open, and Mr. Leddenhurst led her to the sofa; where, after a few hysterical sighs, she found herself a little better.

'Emily, my love, lend me your arm,' said she, rising; 'I shall soon recover in the air; it 's nothing but the heat of the room.'

So Emily led her friend to an arbor in the garden; where, as soon as they were seated, Elizabeth leaned her head upon Emily's neck, and burst into tears.

'What is the matter?' said Emily. 'Are you ill, dear Elizabeth—or has any thing grieved you?'

She continued to weep and sigh, but made no answer.

'I am sure,' resumed Emily, after a short silence, 'I do not desire to know any thing you

wish to conceal; but if I can guess why you are so unhappy—'

'Oh, then, I have betrayed myself!' exclaimed Elizabeth, hiding her face.

'Betrayed yourself! what do you mean, Elizabeth? I only thought that perhaps you were sorry about going to the ball, and giving up the Sunday school; and if—'

'Oh, my dear!' interrupted Elizabeth, 'you do not know, you cannot guess—it is quite impossible that any one should ever discover the cause of my uneasiness: that must ever remain a secret in my own bosom.'

'Then certainly I shall not inquire,' said Emily. 'Will you like to walk?'

'No, stay a moment; forgive my weakness, Emily, and let me talk to you about my sorrow, although I cannot reveal the source of it.'

'As long as you please, but take care, or I shall find it out.'

'Oh dear! oh dear! oh dear me!' said Elizabeth.

'Dear me!' said Emily.

'Do you think Mr. Leddenhurst observed the words of that song?' inquired Elizabeth.

'I can't tell, indeed,' replied Emily.

'How silly it was of me to attempt to play it!'

'Why so?'

Elizabeth looked down, and sighed.

'How beautifully the sun is setting!' observed

Emily, who found it difficult to maintain her part of the conversation.

At length Elizabeth broke another silence by saying, 'Emily, I know I may confide in you; will you promise faithfully never to betray me, if I tell you all my heart?'

'Yes, you may depend upon me,' said Emily.

'But how shall I confess my weakness?' resumed Elizabeth; 'cannot you guess?—Oh, Emily, if you had ever loved, you would know how to feel for me!'

'Dear! are you in love?' said Emily, simply.

'Hush! my dear creature!' cried Elizabeth; 'but what' continued she, in a low voice, 'what but this fatal attachment could have led me to act as I have done?'

'Do you know now,' said Emily, after running over in her mind the list of all the beaux and bachelors she knew, 'do you know, I am entirely at a loss to think who you can be at all attached to.'

'Oh, my dear, that fatal regiment!' cried Elizabeth.

'Already!' said Emily.

'You do not know him, or you would not be surprised.'

'Is it that tall, brave-looking officer that I have seen walking with your father?'

'No, that 's Captain Scot; he is not particularly tall: you 'd not be so much struck at first

sight: but indeed he has paid me such attentions! though I know he is only flirting with me', said Elizabeth, sighing.

'Then indeed, Elizabeth, I hope you will endeavor to overcome it,' said Emily; 'and as it is so very recent, I should think with a little effort—'

'A little effort! Oh, Emily, you know nothing about it; never, never; it cannot be overcome!'

'How are you now, Elizabeth?' said Miss Weston, who appeared at that instant.

'Thank you, better,' said Elizabeth, starting.

'She is a great deal better,' said Emily, blushing.

'I feared you would stay too long in the evening air,' said Miss Weston; and, supported by her two friends, Elizabeth returned to the company.

Elizabeth had long wished for an opportunity of being a heroine; for which nothing had been wanting but a hero; and this being so unexpectedly supplied, it was no wonder that, mistaking ambition of conquest, and partiality to scarlet cloth, for love, she should presently exhibit its interesting phenomena.

She had not, however, been guilty of any misrepresentation in saying that Lieutenant Robinson had 'paid her *such* attentions;' for this young man had fallen in love with Elizabeth; and a short time after this arbor scene, and after

about a month's acquaintance — during which time he spent every morning at her work-table, and every evening in her company—he made his proposals to her father, which meeting with the approbation of the whole family, he became her acknowledged lover.

Elizabeth would have been more gratified at making a conquest of a man of sense; and she would have preferred altogether having a sensible man for her husband: however, she had made a conquest, and she was going to be *Mrs. Robinson*.

Sometimes, indeed, she felt a little dissatisfied during the morning *tête-à-tête* with the strain of her lover's conversation: for it was surprising what silly things he would say rather than not say any thing: but then Elizabeth thought it was because he was in love; and any such unfavorable impression generally wore off during evening parade, when the lieutenant was manœuvring at the head of his company; and always while the band was playing she was *sure* she was in love with him.

After evening parade the band was ordered to play for an hour in the market-place, for the amusement of the ladies, who were assembled on these occasions, and promenaded up and down the square.

It was then that Elizabeth enjoyed the *éclat* of her conquest. While she appeared laughing and talking with her lover among her less fortu-

nate acquaintance, who were walking about in unattended rows, her purpose was served as well, or better, by a blockhead than a genius.

Sometimes she would stop awhile to chat with them, and her nods and bows were dealt about lavishly, and with unwonted cordiality, to every body.

'Who are all these?' said Lieutenant Robinson, one of these evenings, as a new party entered the square.

'Gracious me! all the Leddenhursts,' said Elizabeth, who would rather have avoided the interview.

'And who is that pretty figure in the cottage bonnet?' said he, as they came nearer.

'It 's only Emily Grey,' answered Elizabeth.

'How d'ye do, how d'ye do, Emily, my love, how are you?' said she, addressing her friends as they advanced.

She now introduced Lieutenant Robinson, and would have passed on, but they all seemed disposed to stay and chat, and Mr. Leddenhurst entered into conversation with her lover.

Never had he appeared to so much disadvantage to Elizabeth as at this moment, now that she saw him, not for herself, but for them; saw him, too, by the side of Mr. Leddenhurst.

Her hand had fallen from his arm as they approached, and she now began talking as fast as possible to Mrs. Leddenhurst, Miss Weston, and

Emily, to divert their attention from the conversation that was passing between the gentlemen.

Emily, who had raised her expectations rather unreasonably high, of a being whom it was possible to love in three weeks, was nearly guilty of the rudeness of starting when she first beheld the mean figure, and fiercely vacant countenance, of her friend's admirer.

'Is it possible!' said she to herself, and she looked about to avoid meeting the eye of Elizabeth.

In the meantime the lieutenant continued running on in his usual style of sprightly dulness to Mr. Leddenhurst, who stood looking down upon him with an eye of keen but candid observation.

'What a monstrous curious old cross you've got here!' said he, staring up, and tapping it with his cane.

'Well, good night!' said Elizabeth; 'it 's cold standing in the wind;' and she walked off with her lover, feeling more uncomfortable than ladies *always* do when they walk off with their lovers.

When they reached home, Elizabeth threw herself on the sofa, saying,

'Don't talk to me; I am tired this evening, Mr. Robinson.'

Thus repulsed, he walked backwards and forwards in the room for some time, half whistling; till, stopping on a sudden, he exclaimed,

'That Emily, what d'ye call her, is a confounded pretty girl!'

'Do you think so?' said Elizabeth, rousing up: 'Well, she does look rather pretty in her bonnet.'

Here the lieutenant resumed his walk and his whistle; but the remark had a fortunate effect upon Elizabeth. The momentary jealousy made him appear surprisingly more agreeable, and worth *securing:* and while she sat watching him as he paced up and down in the dusk, she said to herself, 'He *whistles* uncommonly well!'

Very soon after Lieutenant Robinson's proposals were accepted, the regiment, which was quartered at Broadisham, received orders to remove to a distant county. It was expected they would march in six weeks; and as both he and Mr. Palmer were anxious to conclude the affair as soon as possible, it was agreed that the marriage should take place accordingly.

Elizabeth, therefore, suddenly plunged in the agreeable confusion of preparation, had little leisure to study the character and qualifications of her intended husband. He was but *one* of a great variety of important concerns that now distracted her attention. Crapes and sarcenets, laces and jewels, trunks and riding-dresses, her silver tea-pot, her satin work-bag, and her scarlet beau, were objects of alternate and equal interest. Wholly intent upon the *éclat* of her bridal, she had as little inclination as opportunity to look forward to the months and years when she would be a wife, but no longer a bride.

CHAPTER X.

About this time, Eleanor Jones, the invalid mentioned early in this history, having lingered through a painful winter, died peacefully.

Miss Weston and Emily had visited her frequently during her illness, and they were present at the last scene.

Death, as personified and decorated by poetry, Emily had frequently contemplated; but she was unacquainted with the realities of a dying bed.

The moment they entered her room, they perceived the altered expression of her countenance; and although Emily had never seen it before, she saw it was *death* in her face. She felt the shock, but would not turn away; 'for if I cannot bear to see it, how shall I endure it?' thought she.

Soon after they entered she was seized with a convulsive spasm, which lasted several minutes.

'Oh, see!' said Emily, 'cannot we help her? Is there nothing that would give her any relief?'

'Nothing, my dear,' said Miss Weston softly; 'it will soon be over.'

'Dear, dear creature!' cried her distressed mother: 'please God to release her! for I cannot bear this!'

When the spasm was over, her features became

composed, and she looked round upon them with an expression of joyful serenity.

'These are only the struggles of nature,' said Miss Weston; '"the sting of death is sin;" she does not feel that.'

At this she smiled, and her lips moved, but they could not distinguish what was said.

She then lay for sometime quite tranquil: they watched her in silence—and at length perceived that she had ceased to breathe.

Miss Weston led the mother down stairs; while Emily remained fixed to the spot, gazing on the placid corpse.

She looked round on the low, tattered chamber, and thought she should never again wish for the vanities of so short a life.

'This is how they must all end,' she thought; 'and death would look just the same if this poor bed were a state canopy.'

It seemed but a moment, not worth caring for, before she herself must lie down by her side.

Her contemplations were soon interrupted by the entrance of Miss Weston.

'Come, Emily, my love,' said she, 'we can do nothing more here, but we may still comfort her poor mother.'

'I should like to stay longer,' said Emily; 'I never saw death before; how strange, and awful, and beautiful it is!'

'You have staid long enough now,' said her

friend, and she led her out of the chamber; and as soon as they saw that the mourning mother had said and wept her utmost, they took leave, with many assurances of continued friendship.

When they opened the cottage door, they found it was noon-day, and bright sunshine.

Emily had not shed a tear before, but they overflowed at the sight of the bright fields and clear blue sky.

They walked on silently to the entrance of the town.

'Had not we better go the back way? You will not go through the town this morning, Miss Weston?' said Emily.

'Why not, my dear?'

'I always avoid it when I can,' replied Emily, 'and just now especially.'

'Unfortunately I have an errand in the town,' said Miss Weston, 'at Mrs. Eve's.'

'At Mrs. Eve's!' said Emily.

They went on; and Emily was obliged to endure the sight of the shops and people, looking as busy as usual.

Mrs. Eve's windows were set out with spring fashions; and when they went in, they found Elizabeth, with her mother, and other ladies, making purchases, and examining the new assortment.

'I was just wishing for you,' said Elizabeth, 'to give me your opinion of these sarcenets:

which should you prefer, Emily, this rose color, or the pale blue?'

'They are both extremely pretty,' said Miss Weston, 'but the blue, I think, is the most delicate.'

'I advise you to go up and see the millinery,' said Mrs. Palmer to Miss Weston and Emily; 'and really you'll be delighted. Mrs. Eve has some uncommonly pretty things come down, I assure you.'

'We have something quite new in flowers, ladies,' said one of the young milliners, taking down a tempting drawer. 'That's a sweet thing, ma'am!' said she, holding up a quivering spray before Emily; who, sickening at the sight, made her escape as soon as she could to the opposite counter; where Elizabeth still stood, wavering between the rose color and the blue.

'Yes, Elizabeth,' she said, 'they are very pretty; but we are just come from Eleanor Jones's; and have seen her die.'

'Die! good gracious, have you?—She is gone at last, poor soul! is she?' said Elizabeth.—'Dear me!' added she, perceiving that Emily expected her to say something more.

'I wish you had been with us,' said Emily; 'you cannot think what a striking scene it was: I think I shall not soon forget it.'

'It must indeed be very affecting, I should think,' said Elizabeth, still glancing at the rival tints.

'I will walk back with you now, if you would wish to see her,' continued Emily; 'she is looking so placid and tranquil: would you like to go?'

'My dear, you must excuse me,' said Elizabeth; 'my spirits are so weak, I never could endure to see a corpse.'

'Why, she is only looking as we ourselves shall very soon.'

'La! my dear Emily!' cried Elizabeth; 'but really I have not a moment to spare—you know how I'm circumstanced: besides,' said she, looking up and down the street, 'I am expecting Frederick every instant: he was to call here for us half an hour ago.'

'Poor Elizabeth!' said Emily, as soon as they had got out of Mrs. Eve's shop, 'how completely she is absorbed again in these things; and how trifling, how disgusting they are! I hope I shall never again waste a thought, or a moment, about them!'

'They are trifling certainly,' said Miss Weston: 'but I think they are only disgusting when they are made affairs of importance, and suffered to engage a disproportionate share of time and attention. 'There is a time for all things,' you know, a *little* time, even for attending to the trifles of life. It would not pain me, I confess, to see Elizabeth just now busily engaged in these affairs, if I were sure they were kept in due subordination to better things: but there is the danger.'

'I wish she had been with us to-day,' said Emily, 'that she might have felt, as I did, the transition from that room to Mrs. Eve's exhibition.'

'It is very desirable sometimes,' said Miss Weston, 'to view the gaieties of life in such strong contrast; and we should be careful constantly to maintain such an impression of these *realities*, as to counteract their undue influence. But it is not intended that we should walk through the world only by a sepulchral light; nor that we should be *always* turning aside from its pleasant fields, to wander among the tombs. Indeed the mind may take a melancholy pleasure in being familiarized with such objects, without making real progress in religion. It is far better for our thoughts to be habitually fixed on the world *beyond* the grave: that is more likely to stimulate us to run the race that is set before us, with patience, with vigor, and with cheerfulness; and to give us at last the victory over the grave.'

The first time Emily called upon the widow Jones after her daughter's funeral, she found her in a great deal of trouble.

The expenses of a long illness had reduced her so low that she was unable to pay her rent, which had already run on several quarters. By Eleanor's death she had also lost her chief means of support; being herself too feeble to go out to work as she used to do. So that, with grievous

lamentations, she told Emily she must turn out of her cottage, and end her days in the parish poor-house.

Emily, much concerned at this account, set off to consult with her friends at Stokely. At the outskirts of the park there was a little building covered with ivy, which had formerly been a pleasure-house, but was now disused, and falling into decay. It struck Emily, as she passed, that with a little repair it might be made a comfortable asylum for the poor widow. She went in full of this scheme; and before she had exhausted half her arguments, obtained Mr. Leddenhurst's free consent. He promised to have it put in proper repair, and commissioned Emily to superintend the alterations; as she expressed much anxiety lest the workmen should tear down the ivy, or lop the branches which spread so prettily over the thatch.

Mrs. Leddenhurst engaged to supply it with furniture; and it was to be ready by Midsummer-day: the day on which Mrs. Jones had warning to quit her cottage. To increase the pleasure, Emily proposed that in the meantime it should be kept a profound secret from the widow: but Mrs. Leddenhurst suggested, whether, for the sake of that momentary surprise, it would be right to keep her so long in uneasiness at the thought of going to the poor-house.

'I forgot that,' said Emily; but she looked so

much disappointed, that Miss Weston proposed to hold out only an indefinite hope, which might allay her anxiety, without letting her know the actual good fortune that awaited her.

Emily now went to work with alacrity. There was much to be done which she undertook to execute herself, besides giving directions to the workmen; and she had a great deal of trouble in persuading them implicitly to follow her orders. They had so little notion of the picturesque, that if she had not kept a constant watch over them, the place would, in her opinion, have been completely spoiled.

There was a little plot in front, overgrown with nettles, which she had cleared, and was converting into a flower garden. The children were very much pleased with being employed under Emily on this occasion. They were permitted to weed and dig, and to do whatever services she required. To adorn the entrance, she contrived to form a rustic porch, with a seat, of mossy logs and branches; and she led over it a wild honeysuckle and a white jessamine, which had long grown there, and crept over the front of the building.

One day, while Emily was busily employed in twining the sprays of her favorite jessamine over this porch, she was surprised by her friend Elizabeth.

'My dear Emily,' said she, 'I'm just come to

bid you good-by—I am going to be married to-morrow.'

'To-morrow!' said Emily, and her hand fell from the bough.

'Yes, indeed,' replied Elizabeth, 'I did not expect it would be quite so soon; but the regiment is ordered off immediately, and Frederick is anxious we should spend a few days at Cheltenham before we join it: and I assure you I am quite fagged with packing and preparing. But I would not go on any account without seeing you,' said she, with a voice and look of apathy that went to Emily's heart.

She sat down in her porch, and burst into tears.

But Elizabeth was too busy, and too happy, to weep. Just come from the important bustle of preparation, the sight of Emily in her garden hat and gloves, so intent upon fitting up a house for an old woman, excited that kind of contemptuous pity, with which the simple pleasures of simple people are commonly regarded by such observers as Elizabeth.

After standing an awkward minute, wishing Emily had not cried, she added—

'Well, Emily, my dear, I must not stay.'

'Stay one moment,' said Emily; 'I was thinking of the old days when we were children, and used to play together under the chestnut trees.'

Elizabeth was touched by the sudden recollection, and, without an effort, a tear came into her eye. She sat down by her friend, and they embraced affectionately.

'Elizabeth, I hope you will be happy,' said Emily; 'I hope Mr. Robinson is—'

'Oh, he is indeed,' interrupted Elizabeth; 'I have no doubt I shall: he is the most pleasant, generous creature in the world. I wish you had seen more of him, Emily; but really, of late, you know, I have been so particularly occupied.—But, indeed, I must be gone!' said she rising; and they parted with a hasty embrace.

Emily followed her to the gate, and watched her with tearful eyes to the winding of the road, as she went briskly on

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Elizabeth slept soundly in consequence of this day's fatigue; and awoke the next morning with only a confused idea of what was before her. But the red beams of the rising sun, shining full upon her white hat and feathers, brought the strange reality to her recollection. She started up, but the clock struck four—only four! So she lay down again; fell into a wakeful doze, and dreamed it was only a dream.

At six o'clock, the maid who had nursed her from her infancy came to awaken her. She looked at her young mistress as she lay asleep,

and, brushing a tear from her eyes, she said, 'Come, Miss Elizabeth, dear, it 's time to get up, ma'am!'

At ten o'clock the chaise that was to take Elizabeth away stood at her father's door. Soon after, she appeared, covered with a splendid veil, and was handed in by the smiling lieutenant; when, bowing, and waving her hand to the party assembled at the street-door, they drove off.

It was a beautiful morning; the bells rang merrily, and as it passed the end of Church-street, they outnoised the rattling of the chaise.

Elizabeth, in passing through her native town, felt an increased glow of satisfaction, from observing her friends and neighbors going about the ordinary business of the day. Some were *washing*, and some were *brewing*. Parties of children, with their workbags were sauntering to school—and there were the pale teachers, peeping over the tall window-blinds, to see the bride—and there sat Miss Oliver with her hair in papers—and the row of young women at Mrs. Eve's all together raised their heads from their work, at the sound of the chaise; while she, a gay and youthful bride, was leaving them all to their monotonous employments: she was married—and she was going to Cheltenham.

CHAPTER XI.

——'No, this way,' cried Emily, as she was conducting the widow Jones to her new dwelling.

'Dear miss! where are you a fetching of me? 'twas never worth a while to turn such an old woman as me out of my house and home,' said she in a crying tone, as she went hobbling after Emily.

'But I tell you,' said Emily, 'you should not be thinking of your old cottage now.' Yet, in spite of all her remonstrances, the widow Jones went groaning and grumbling all the way to Stokely.

Richard, and Caroline, and Lucy, were anxiously waiting their arrival at the garden gate.

Emily, as she approached, called eagerly to them to stand out of the way that they might not intercept the view of the dwelling; which, with the little white gate and rustic porch peeping under the trees, had certainly a very pretty effect.

'What do you think of that?' said she, looking eagerly at the widow.

'Deary me!' said she.

'Do you think it pretty? Then this is where you are to live; so do not be fretting any more about your old cottage, for you are to live here,' repeated Emily. 'Is'nt it a pretty little retired place for you, now?'

'I thank you, and his honor, and the ladies, a thousand and a thousand times,' said she, casting a forlorn glance at the thick shade that environed her dwelling.

'What, don't you like it?' said Emily.

'Why, dear, I can't mislike it,' said she, 'here 's a power of trees, to be sure! but 't will be more lightsome come winter.'

'But that is the beauty of it,' said Emily. 'Come, then, and see if it is not comfortable inside.'

Emily indeed had spared no pains to make it so. The kettle was now boiling on the fire, and the little deal table was set out ready for tea. The widow's favorite cat had been dexterously conveyed away that morning, and Caroline and Lucy had kept her in safe custody all day. With indefatigable care and coaxing, and after various obstinate attempts to escape, they at last succeeded in making her lie down to sleep upon the hearth.

'Well-a-day, there 's our puss!' exclaimed the widow, now looking *really* pleased.

This was the only thing that did not look strange to her; and novelty, much as it charms the young, is itself a grievance to the old.

Emily now only waited to point out some of the principal beauties and conveniences of the new abode.

'See,' said she, setting open the door, 'I'll

tell you what you should do these fine summer evenings. You must bring your knitting, and sit here to work in the porch; you'll look so pretty sitting to knit in the porch! and be sure, added she, 'that you do not tear down the ivy that grows over your little window.'

The widow Jones having promised to do, and not to do, all that she thought it reasonable to require, Emily only stood a moment at the door, surveying, with a picturesque eye, the group formed by the old woman, her cat, and the tea-table; and then took leave, saying, she would 'now leave her to enjoy herself.'

The evening before this, Emily had put the finishing stroke to her work; and when it was done, she thought it looked such a snug little seclusion, that she very much longed to live there herself. It was a calm summer evening, she was alone, and she sat down in the porch to enjoy it, just at the time when the moonlight began to prevail over the twilight; and Emily began to feel very poetically.

A scrap of paper that was left there rendered the temptation irresistible: but she had written only a few lines, when Mr. Leddenhurst appeared at the garden gate.

'What are you about now, Emily?' said he.

Emily put by her verses, colored, and said, 'Nothing, sir;' and then took him in to admire her contrivances. He did admire them, and she

thought no more about her verses till she got home again, and found herself alone in her father's parlor. She then read them over, merely to see if they were worth finishing; and she took a fresh piece of paper, and was just getting into the spirit of it again, when she heard her father's knock at the door: and he, with several other gentlemen, came bustling in, talking all together, and very earnestly, about a parish dispute which was to be decided the next day at the county assizes.

'I tell you, sir, they must lose their cause,' said one of them—'Miss Grey, how d'ye do, ma'am? —and I 'll give you my reasons, Mr. Grey—'

'Take off these things, child,' said her father, pushing away Emily's papers rather disrespectfully, and laying a pile of law-books on the table.

Emily took them off, and made her escape as fast as possible to her own room, thinking, as she went, how foolish it was of her to write poetry. The verses were put by in a folio with several similar effusions, of which some were better, and some worse. They were mostly in a strain that to the uninitiated might appear inconsistent with Emily's lively and flourishing appearance; but nothing could be more unreasonable than requiring young writers of poetry to 'prove their words;' unless it were, inflicting upon them some of the extraordinary things they sometimes wish for themselves when they are rhyming.

The verses Emily began writing this evening n the widow's porch were as follow:—

Say, spirit, if thou wanderest nigh,
  Of every sylvan dale;
What forms, unseen by mortal eye,
  Frequent this leafy vale?

Perchance 't was once the flowery court
  Of merry elfin king;
Where fairy people loved to sport,
  And tread the nightly ring.

The sun, descending down the sky,
  In floods of misty light,
Surveys it with his golden eye,
  And makes the valley bright.

The moon, who rideth in her pride
  At solemn midnight hour;
And sheds her radiance far and wide,
  On turret, dome and tower;

Here sleeps upon the chequer'd glade;
  Nor finds a softer rest
On myrtle bower, or classic shade,
  Or ocean's silver breast.

And oft would I, alone, resort
  To this seclusion dear;
Uncheck'd to breathe the ardent thought,
  Or shed th' unquestion'd tear.

O Nature! how thy charms beguile
  Or soothe our cares to sleep!
Thou seem'st to smile with those who smile,
  And weep with those who weep!

The vernal tint, the summer breeze,
  E'en winter's aspect drear,
Thy woods, and vales, and skies, and seas,
  Like friendship soothe and cheer.

The soul in thy serene retreats
  Communion sweet may find;
But gay assemblies, crowded streets,
  Are desert to the mind.

The throng where giddy mortals press,
  Is solitude to me;
But Nature, in her wildest dress,
  Refined society.

CHAPTER XII.

ELIZABETH had scarcely been married two months when she received the news of her father's death. He was taken off suddenly by a fit of apoplexy; and his affairs were found in so embarrassed a state, that a narrow jointure alone secured his widow, and her recent settlement his daughter, from absolute want.

In consequence of this change of fortune, Mrs. Palmer immediately retired to a distance from Broadisham: and about the same time, Elizabeth despatched the following letter to Mr. Leddenhurst.

Chester, Sept. 23d.

'My dear Sir,

'It would be absolutely impossible for me to attempt to describe the variety of painful emotions I experience at this moment, in taking the liberty of addressing you. Nothing indeed, but a conviction of your extreme goodness, could have emboldened me to undertake so awkward a task.

'The poignant affliction occasioned by the loss of my lamented parent needed no aggravation; but I am persuaded you cannot be a stranger to the very unpleasant embarrassments in which, in consequence of his untimely decease, his affairs

are involved. The result to us, as you may readily imagine, has been particularly unfortunate. The truth is, my dear sir, that Lieutenant Robinson, depending on those resources of which we have been so fatally disappointed, has contracted some trifling debts, which it is, in fact, out of his power immediately to discharge. He has, you know, considerable expectations, but these are of no present avail; and I am persuaded you would be greatly concerned were I to relate the excessively unpleasant circumstances to which we have been exposed for some time past. In consequence of which I have been induced to address you; and encouraged by a recollection of your former goodness, to request the loan of two hundred pounds, if perfectly convenient; and which there is not the smallest doubt but we shall in a very short time be able to return.

'You may be surprised that Mr. Robinson does not apply to his relations; the fact is, that the uncle to whom he has repeatedly written on the subject, is a low man, in trade, of very sordid and contracted ideas; who absolutely refuses the smallest assistance, except on conditions with which it is absolutely impossible we should comply.

'This determined me to trouble you with the present application; indeed there is no individual in the whole circle of my friends on whose generosity and friendship I could so firmly rely. And

need I say, under what infinite obligations we shall consider ourselves, should you be induced to comply with the request?

'Lieutenant Robinson begs to join me in kindest regards to yourself and Mrs. Leddenhurst; and believe me, my dear sir, with the greatest respect, your most obliged friend and servant,

'ELIZABETH ROBINSON.'

A tremendous secret was discovered to Elizabeth a very short time after her marriage in a letter from this uncle.—Lieutenant Robinson had been—a linen-draper.

He was a weak, hot-headed young man; a dislike to business, that is, to employment, and an opportunity he once had of trying on a military hat, inspired him with an ardent desire for the profession of arms. And at the expiration of his apprenticeship to his uncle, deaf to the remonstrances of his prudent friends, he commenced the life of a gentleman.

In order to escape the ridicule of his brother-officers; and to remove, if possible, the suspicions they evidently entertained of his origin, he thought it requisite to plunge into most of their extravagances. In consequence of which—notwithstanding occasional supplies from his uncle, and the convenient practice of leaving every town at which they were stationed in debt—he was kept in perpetual embarrassments.

His alliance with Miss Palmer, therefore, appeared a very eligible measure. He had been confidently assured that her father was a man of handsome property, and this opinion every thing he saw at his house and table tended to confirm.

Elizabeth thought this discovery at once released her from all obligation to love, honor, or obey her husband. From that time she conducted herself towards him with coldness and haughtiness, which he bore with tolerable patience until the intelligence of her father's death, and the unexpected state of his affairs, gave him, as he said, 'a just right to resent it.'

Trained in habits of show and expense, and wholly unaccustomed to economical calculation, Elizabeth had soon made alarming demands upon her husband's limited resources; which, depending upon her promised but delayed portion, he had not thought it necessary to check.

The news of Mr. Palmer's insolvency made an immediate alteration in this respect. Nor did Elizabeth fully comprehend the nature of her misfortune, until the first time that, for want both of money and credit, she was really obliged to deny herself something she wished for. With a strange feeling of impatient astonishment, she then discovered that she *must* do without, what she had said 'it was absolutely impossible to do without.' A scene of mutual upbraiding between

herself and her husband was the consequence of this first lesson in economy, or rather in poverty. But they reproached each other, not for their faults, but their misfortunes—not for being imprudent, but for being poor.

Elizabeth, however, had no sooner despatched her letter to Stokely, than she felt relieved of her difficulties. She had witnessed so many instances of Mr. Leddenhurst's generosity, that she was confident of receiving the requested supply. And she had not yet learned to look beyond the narrow extent of two hundred pounds.

She was engaged to dine at the colonel's, and had just finished dressing for the occasion, when her husband brought her the expected letter.

'This is fortunate indeed,' said she: 'then, Mr. Robinson, be so good, while I read it, to step over to Levi's, and desire them to send the gold clasps; you may say, you know, I shall call and settle the account to-morrow morning.'

They who have ever unfolded a letter, expecting at every turn to behold the fine texture and expressive features of a bank-note which was *really wanted*, and found it was *only a letter*, will know better what Elizabeth felt on this occasion, than others who never met with such a circumstance. Having first turned it about in all directions, she sat down and read as follows:—

'Stokely, Sept. 28th.

'My dear Mrs. Robinson,

'I SHOULD be sorry to forfeit the opinion you are so good as to entertain of my readiness to serve my friends by every means in my power; and shall be happy should I succeed in convincing you, that I am sincerely desirous of doing so in the present instance; although it may not be in the way that appears most expedient to you.

'I should have been greatly at a loss to know how most effectually to serve you, if I had not been favored with an interview with Lieutenant Robinson's uncle: of whose character I conceive you have formed a mistaken idea. He appears to me to be a man of integrity, good sense, and benevolence; and highly deserving the esteem and confidence of his relations.

'He has undertaken a journey to Broadisham, with the view of explaining to your friends the plan he had suggested to his nephew, in hopes of obtaining their concurrence, and influence with you.

'Having himself been unsuccessful in former applications to you and Lieutenant Robinson, he has requested me to address you on the subject; a task which I undertake the more cheerfully, since you have already indulged me with your confidence.

'Mr. Sandford informs me that Lieutenant

Robinson was not intended for the military profession, having been trained to business; but entered it very recently, contrary to the advice of his friends. His uncle hoped, however, that after having experienced some of the inconveniences to which he would be exposed from such a change of habits and circumstances, he would more readily listen to proposals for returning to his former pursuits: and had determined, for a time, to urge him no further on the subject. It was not till he heard of his having formed an alliance, and with so young a lady, ill qualified to brook the difficulties of her situation, that Mr. Sandford became solicitous to prevail with his nephew to abandon his new profession immediately.

'With regard to those expectations you allude to, Mr. Sandford requests me, as a friend, my dear madam, to assure you that they must prove wholly fallacious, unless Mr. Robinson founds them on his own diligent exertions. Should he be willing to enter into the prudent views of his uncle, he may depend upon every support and encouragement it is in his power to afford; otherwise he must still submit to those distressing embarrassments, to which the expensive habits so commonly contracted in his profession, and the limited resources it affords, unite to expose him.

'Justice to his other relations, Mr. Sandford directs me to say, must forbid his continuing to answer Mr. Robinson's repeated demands, even

if there were a probability of its proving of any ultimate advantage to him; but so far from this, he considers that it would only be a means of encouraging those expensive habits, and, in the end, of plunging him in deeper embarrassments.

'And now, my dear Mrs. Robinson, permit me to assure you, that I am solely influenced by a tender concern for your real welfare, when I earnestly recommend you to use every endeavor to prevail upon Mr. Robinson to accede to his uncle's proposals. I am not surprised that, at first sight, they should appear to you such as it was absolutely impossible to comply with; and I readily admit that nothing less than an heroic effort can enable you to submit with a good grace to such a change of circumstances. But in making that effort you would find a noble satisfaction; and in descending cheerfully, and gracefully, to an humbler sphere, more true independence and dignity of mind would be exerted, than would probably ever be displayed throughout the whole of a gay life.

'Considering that it might not be agreeable to his nephew to engage in business in his own immediate neighborhood, Mr. Sandford has been making inquiries in different directions, and has lately met with a very eligible offer from a respectable tradesman retiring from business. The only objection that I know of to the situation is, that it is at the village of Hilsbury, not more than

fifteen miles distant from Broadisham; but as it is much secluded, and remote from any of your connexions, perhaps you would not consider that a sufficient reason for declining it. The present proprietor has realized a considerable property in the concern: it being the only one in that line in a populous neighborhood; and I should conceive a retired situation of this nature would be more agreeable to you than the publicity of a large town.

'Should Mr. Robinson be willing to undertake this concern, his uncle and I will cheerfully unite to advance the capital; and with regard to the remittance you mention, it will be forwarded to Chester by the same day's post that informs us of his having agreed to this proposal.

'In case of your concurrence, Mr. Sandford proposes to enter immediately upon the business at Hilsbury, in his nephew's name; where he would see every thing properly prepared for your reception, and await your arrival.

'After all, my dear friend, I am aware that no terms can be employed in this affair that will not be harsh and offensive to you; nor will I attempt to represent what might be called the pleasant side of it: for perhaps you have not yet had sufficient experience of the inconveniences of an unsettled life, nor of the miseries of *showy poverty*, to estimate the value of a peaceful home and a moderate competence.

'I would rather remind you that we are never so safe, nor so truly well off, as when following the obvious directions of providence. Our affairs are all ordered by Him, who is acquainted not only with our outward circumstances, but most intimate with our hearts; and who knows by what means they will be most effectually subdued, and made willing to accept of real happiness. And be assured, my dear friend, that *by whatever circumstances* we are taught the nature and value of *real* religion, and led cordially to embrace it, *then*, and *not till then*, we shall find happiness.

'Believe me your very sincere friend,

'C. L. LEDDENHURST.'

When Lieutenant Robinson returned from his commission to the jeweller's, he found his lady in strong hysterics in her room.

'Mercy upon us! what 's the matter?' exclaimed he, stopping in dismay at the door.

'Elizabeth! Betsy! why don't you speak, child! what 's the matter, I say?' continued he, advancing towards her.

But Elizabeth took no notice, except motioning with her hand for him to stand further off. Presently a servant came in, saying,

'If you please, ma'am, here 's Mr. Levi, with the gold clasps for you to choose; and here 's the bill he bid me to bring up to you.'

'I can't look at them now; tell him to call another time,' said Elizabeth. 'There, Mr. Robinson, read that!' said she, pointing to the letter, and again falling back in her chair.

When he had read it, he walked up and down thoughtfully for some time; at length, going towards his wife, he said, timidly,

'I 'll tell you what, my dear, it does not signify objecting and objecting, we must, I know we must—'

'Must what?' said Elizabeth.

'Must do what Mr. Leddenhurst says, my dear.'

'Do exactly as you think proper,' cried Elizabeth; 'I am not in the least surprised, Mr. Robinson, that *you* are so willing to acquiesce in it; but I never will—do you suppose I ever would submit to be the wife of a tradesman?'

'I 'll tell you what, Betsy!' said her husband, flying into a passion, 'I can't, nor I won't submit to this any longer! you did'nt bring me a penny, nor a halfpenny, nor a sixpence; and what business have *you*, I should be glad to know, to talk in this unbecoming manner to *me*?'

'O heavens!' cried Elizabeth, 'what a barbarian! let me escape!' and rising hastily, she flew down stairs, and throwing herself tragically into the chair, which had been long waiting for her at the door, ordered to be taken to Colonel Harrison's.

While she was going there, Elizabeth, notwithstanding her complicated misfortunes, was far from feeling *really* unhappy. She remembered a great many heroines who had been in debt and had bad husbands. Young, lovely, distressed, she was flying for protection from his cruelty. Besides, she had fully determined to open her whole heart to her *friend* Mrs. Harrison; and she was quite certain, that by some means or other, she should be rescued from the threatened degradation.

Elizabeth made her *entrée* at the Colonel's with an air of interesting distress. There was nobody then present but the lady of the house, and the major of the regiment, with whom she was particularly intimate.

'My dear creature, how shockingly ill you look!' exclaimed Mrs. Harrison.

'Indeed I am not very well,' said she; and throwing herself upon the sofa, she burst into an agony of tears.

While Mrs. Harrison was repeating her inquiries and condolence, the graceful major seated himself beside her, saying, tenderly,

'My dear Mrs. Robinson, what has happened to distress you? only tell me if there is any possible way in which I can serve you?'

Elizabeth could only reply by smiling on him gratefully through her tears, for other company entered at that moment: but she whispered Mrs.

Harrison, that she would tell her *all* as soon as they were alone.

After dinner the ladies walked in the garden; when Elizabeth contrived to take her friend aside for a few minutes. She found it, however, an awkward task, notwithstanding the vague and general terms she employed, to disclose those parts of her story which related to her husband's connexions.

'But, my dear child, what an unlucky thing you should ever have liked him!' said Mrs. Harrison. 'Upon my word, my dear, I feel quite distressed for you.'

'Only tell me what steps I ought to take,' said Elizabeth; 'I rely entirely on your friendship.'

'Indeed, my dear, I should be excessively happy to advise you, and serve you, I'm sure, in any way that lies in my power, in this unpleasant affair; but really it 's an awkward thing to interfere between man and wife: indeed I am not so much surprised that Lieutenant Robinson should consider it altogether most prudent to take the advice of his relations.'

'But what then will become of me?' cried Elizabeth, weeping passionately.

'Come, come, my dear Mrs. Robinson, let me beg of you not to discompose yourself thus,' said Mrs. Harrison. 'To be sure,' continued she, sighing. 'We know it is our duty at all times to submit to what the Almighty is pleased to ap-

point for us. But really I must insist upon it, that you do not distress yourself in this manner; I can't endure to see you so unhappy. Here are all our friends!—for heaven's sake, my dear, dry your tears: shall I send you a glass of anything?'

'Nothing, thank you,' said Elizabeth, who felt, at this forlorn moment, the difference between a friend and an acquaintance. The others now joined them; and as her eye wandered from one smiling, selfish face to another—faces from which the unhappy had *nothing to hope*—she involuntarily thought of Emily, and Stokely. The major, however, was a friend nearer at hand; but she saw no more of him during the evening. When she returned at ten o'clock to her comfortless lodgings, she was surprised to find him in earnest conversation with her husband.

The major, who was very good-natured, had frequently accommodated Lieutenant Robinson with small sums of money; which by this time had amounted to a debt that he was anxious to have discharged. He had been rather pressing on this subject of late; so that the lieutenant came to the resolution of disclosing to him the whole state of his affairs, and asking his advice on the present emergency. No sooner did the major understand that by resigning his commission he would be able to pay his debts, than he warmly urged him to comply: and it was not so difficult a matter to persuade him as it would

once have been. He began to be weary of his present mode of life, of which the novelty had already worn off; and of the misery of being always in debt, and always short of money. His objections to business were less insurmountable than those of his lady; it was not pride, but idleness: and he now considered what a difference there would be between master and man.

'But then there 's my wife,' said he to the major. 'If you had but seen the piece of work we had this morning! Let me beg of you, my dear sir, to try what you can do with her; she will not listen to me, that 's for certain.'

This task the major undertook; and when Elizabeth entered, he addressed her with an air of friendly interest, saying—

'Mrs. Robinson, we have just been talking over this awkward business of yours; and I do assure you very seriously, as I 've been telling Robinson, I do not see any other plan in the world that as a man of honor he could adopt. In fact, if I were in his place, I should not hesitate a single instant about the business. Indeed, for my own part, I should not feel any particular reluctance to — to — engaging in mercantile concerns—upon my life I should n't. If he were a single man,' continued the major, observing the gathering gloom in Elizabeth's countenance, 'it would be wholly a different affair; but

when a man is responsible for the honor and happiness of a young and lovely woman—'

'Oh, do not talk of *my* happiness,' cried Elizabeth, glancing expressively at her husband; 'that is sacrificed for ever!'

'Heaven forbid!' said the major, looking at his watch.

'So the major's been advising *of* me to lose no time about the business: and he thought I had better write to my uncle and Mr. Leddenhurst by return of post: and so you see, my dear, it's all settled,' said Lieutenant Robinson, anxious to make the whole confession before his friend was gone.

'And I am extremely glad that every thing is so happily adjusted,' said he rising; and unwilling to wait the issue either of fainting-fits or remonstrances, he took leave.

As the door closed upon the gay, agreeable Major, Elizabeth felt herself abandoned to wretchedness. She had no inclination to go into hysterics, nor to remonstrate with her husband; but sat silent and motionless, watching him, while he was sealing and directing the letters for Stokely: — and now she felt *really* unhappy.

The loss of rank *is* a misfortune: and Elizabeth felt its utmost poignancy. She had always indulged that senseless contempt for trade, and

trades-people, which is prevalent among the *vulgar* of *her* class: and she had not had opportunities of knowing, that many of the *truly* noble, the excellent of the earth—that many persons of superior understandings, even of real taste, and respectable information—are to be found standing behind a country counter.

Having, however, no means of redress, Elizabeth suffered the necessary arrangements for their departure to take place undisturbed. During the few weeks they still remained at Chester, she never allowed herself to take any distinct view of the future: only indulging a kind of vague hope, that any thing so insupportable as the condition which threatened her, she should never be actually permitted to endure. And since nothing was now to be hoped from friends, relations, or acquaintance, she began to think that chance, or fate, or Providence, or something, would certainly interfere to prevent it.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOTWITHSTANDING these hopes, the day actually arrived on which Elizabeth and her husband took leave of Chester, and set off for their new home.

For, in this interval, no distant relation had died and left them a fortune; not a single individual in all the city of Chester had offered to lend them a thousand pounds; no banker, brewer, nor merchant, wanted a partner; no fashionable dowager a companion. In short, neither luck nor accident prevented their driving safely into the village of Hilsbury on the very day they were expected.

ROBINSON, in gold letters, over the door of a smart country shop, pointed out to Elizabeth her future residence.

'Is there no private door?' said she to her new uncle, as he handed her from the chaise.

'We have no other door; please to follow me, ma'am, and I 'll show you the way,' said he, conducting her through the shop, into a light, pleasant parlour. It was in reality far pleasanter than the dark and shabby apartment which Elizabeth used to call her drawing room, in their lodgings at Chester.

'Welcome to Hilsbury, ma'am!' said the uncle, courteously.

Elizabeth bowed; and returned laconic answers to his repeated good-natured attempts to draw her into conversation.

But Mr. Robinson, who felt more at ease, and more in his element than he had done for two years past, was in high good humor, and very talkative.

'Bless my heart, uncle, what a nice snug little place you've got for us here!' said he, rubbing his hands, and looking round the room.

There were some neat flower-stands, set out with autumn flowers; and a very pretty painted work-table; and various little decorations; at which, however, Elizabeth was rather surprised than pleased, when she observed them.

Every part of the house wore the same appearance of neatness and comfort; and seemed adjusted by a correct taste, careful to prevent an awkward contrast between the shop and the dwelling. It was something more than neat, and yet less than elegant.

Elizabeth, as she was conducted over it, could not help wondering that the old man should have so good a notion of doing things. For he had been strictly forbidden to inform her, to whose taste and activity the credit really belonged. She was indebted to Mr. Sandford for the desire of having every thing comfortable for her reception, and

for the willingness to pay for it: but it was her friend Emily who had done the rest.

Emily, having heard Mr. Sandford expressing a wish that things might be made as agreeable as possible to the young lady, and lamenting his own ignorance of these affairs, earnestly requested permission to attend him to Hilsbury, to assist in making the requisite preparations: which was agreed to, upon Miss Weston's offering to accompany her. And during the time that Elizabeth was waiting at Chester, thinking herself abandoned by all the world, her two friends were busily employed in planning and executing those little contrivances to make her comfortable, which would not occur to the genius of an upholsterer.

It was not till the morning of the very day on which Elizabeth was expected, that all was in complete readiness. Mr. Leddenhurst's carriage stood at the door to take them home. Miss Weston was quite ready to go: but Emily still lingered, to see if every thing was in exact order. She replaced the flowers—then returned to adjust the folds of the window curtains—and stood at the parlor door, to see how it would strike Elizabeth when she first entered. She next returned to that which was intended to be Elizabeth's room, which was fortunate; for the wind had blown up one corner of the white napkin on the dressing-table. Emily laid it smooth—set the looking-glass in precisely the proper angle—once more pat-

ted the volumes on the book-shelves quite even —and after a moment's thought, took down the handsome new Bible which had been provided, and laid it on the dressing-table. She then went down stairs, and having repeated sundry injunctions to Mr. Sandford, sprang nimbly into the carriage and drove off.

When Elizabeth arose the next morning, refreshed from the fatigue of her journey; and opened her pleasant window, which looked across the village street upon a fine hilly country; her spirits experienced a momentary revival—a transient glow of comfort, such as will occasionally beam out upon the deepest gloom. But it *was* transient: the sight of Mr. Edwards the shopman, in the street below, taking down the shutters, recalled her to a sense of her unhappiness.

Comfort sounds a dull word to those who are accustomed to live upon *enjoyment:* to Elizabeth it had few charms. In surveying her new situation, she was rather provoked than pleased, to find there was any thing to render her discontent less reasonable. She had neither philosophy enough to *be* pleased, nor good-nature enough to appear so. Indeed it is nothing less than Christian humility, that can make persons willing to be happy in any way that is not of their own choosing.

Old Mr. Sandford's was the only pleasant face

that was brought down to breakfast this morning: for poor Frederick Robinson found that the two idle years he had spent in his Majesty's service had not had the smallest tendency to lessen his dislike to useful employment. He sighed heavily, when, as soon as breakfast was over, his uncle with the promptness of an industrious man, hurried him away to the counting-house: while Elizabeth, who scrupulously avoided engaging in any thing that would seem like acquiescing in her fate, shut herself up in her room, and employed herself in unpacking her portmanteaus. When she had done so, in spite of her reluctance, she found it most expedient to put away the things in her new drawers. With a heavy heart she put by the gay dresses and ornaments, which were now useless to her: but it was with a deeper pang that she laid aside her husband's discarded uniform. She gazed at the faded scarlet, and tarnished gold; and felt, that *that* was all she had ever admired in Lieutenant Robinson.

The reserve and coldness with which Elizabeth conducted herself towards Mr. Sandford, could not overcome his good-nature. He was particularly fond of young people; and longed to express the kindness of a relation: but he was careful not to offend her by unwelcome familiarity. He saw that she was placed in a new and mortifying situation; and while he regarded her with

true pity and benevolence, he treated her with such respectful tenderness as *would* have dispelled the gloom from many a brow.

Emily loved the old man: and he, while witnessing her cheerful, disinterested zeal in the service of her friend, and while receiving from her himself those respectful attentions which she involuntarily paid to age and worth in every station, often wished that his nephew might have made as good a choice.

Mr. Sandford had been so long absent from his own concerns, that he could only remain a few days longer, to introduce his nephew to the business. During this period he observed with some uneasiness the unpromising disposition they both discovered towards their new duties. Elizabeth sat in state all day at her work-table; leaving her domestic affairs to fate and a servant: while Mr. Robinson wished excessively to be allowed to lounge about in the same gentlemanlike idleness he had been lately used to. As to the business, his uncle and Edwards, he thought, were quite sufficient at present: but as soon as his uncle was gone, he declared that he intended to give his mind to it—'upon his word and honor he would.'

Accustomed to revel at his ease at the luxurious mess, he felt it a particular hardship to have to rise in the midst of dinner to attend a customer.

'Frederick—the bell, Frederick!' his uncle

used to say; but he would be so long preparing to go, that his good-natured uncle usually went himself; Frederick contenting himself with pretending to rise, and saying, 'Don't you go, sir!'

It was not, therefore, without anxiety that Mr. Sandford took leave of his niece and nephew. Just before he set off, he called the latter aside, and gave him some good advice, particularly on the subjects of industry and frugality.

'You know, Frederick,' said he, 'how handsomely Mr. Leddenhurst has come forward: and as for me, I have done more than I ought, in justice to your poor sister and your cousins. So that if you get into fresh difficulties, you must look to others to help you out, for I have done my utmost: and, Frederick,' added he, in a milder tone, 'while we are speaking, let me beg of you to treat poor Mrs. Robinson with as much respect and delicacy as possible. You should consider that you have brought her into a very different situation to what she was brought up to, and it 's natural she should feel it—quite natural. You should consider, too, what a delicate young creature she is, and give her every indulgence that 's prudent; and make allowances: a little tenderness and consideration may do a great deal in reconciling her to her circumstances.'

To all this, and more, Mr. Robinson continued saying, 'Certainly, sir—certainly, sir.' As soon as his uncle was gone, for which all the time he

had been rather impatient, he ran up stairs to unpack a new violin which he had brought from Chester, but which he had not thought fit to produce during his uncle's stay. He always believed that he had a fine ear for music; and to scrape on this instrument, was one of the accomplishments he had acquired during his life of leisure.

The village of Hilsbury was remarkably secluded in its situation and appearance. It consisted of a single street, hidden amid the solitude of fine, but barren hills; and, with the exception of Mr. Robinson's house, was formed entirely of stone cottages. The business depended upon the custom of the neighboring farms, and of the poor inhabitants of many little hamlets that were scattered among the hills.

In this solitude Elizabeth's days passed with dreary sameness. She used to sit by her fireside during the dark afternoons of this November, and, watching the sparks from the blacksmith's shed that was directly opposite the house, muse upon scenes of past happiness. This was her only solace; except, indeed, that she experienced a secret satisfaction from the contrast between herself and her condition. When she surveyed her delicate form, her white hands, her beautiful hair, her dress, though unornamented, still elegant, she felt that she was still a heroine in distress: but it was a satisfaction too slight to be a real alleviation; because there were so few to

witness it, and those few so insignificant. And she now discovered—what it required some experience to believe—that it is a far pleasanter thing to be a heroine *not* in distress.

Elizabeth had been some time in her new abode, before she had once made her appearance in the shop. The first time she did so, it was to procure some articles she wanted herself. 'Pray do you sell silk fringe?' she said, in the same tone and manner with which she had been accustomed to make her purchases.

While she was examining the box of fringes, and turning over card after card with her delicate fingers, some ladies from a seat at some miles distance happened to stop at the door in a barouche. Elizabeth took no notice of them as they entered, but continued looking over the fringes, and withdrew as soon as she had found some that suited her. But just as she was quitting the shop, she had the satisfaction of hearing one of them say to Edwards, in a tone of surprise, 'Is *that* Mrs. Robinson?'

Elizabeth was seen reading, very intently, at the parlor window, when the barouche drove past.

There was a green, in the outskirts of the village, where the neighboring young farmers used to assemble to play at cricket. Mr. Robinson was fond of this diversion; and he soon became one of the most constant attendants there.

One day, just as he had snapped to his fiddle-case, and was reaching down his hat to go to this green, Mr. Edwards walked into the counting house.

'I just wish to say, Mr. Robinson,' said he, 'that I shall be obliged to you to look out for some other person to do your business, sir. It 's what I never was used to, and what I can 't undertake, to have every thing laying upon one pair of hands; and unless you think proper to give me some assistance, Mr. Robinson, the sooner you suit yourself the better, sir.'

Much as Mr. Robinson was disturbed at this speech, he could not give up going to the cricket-ground: but he told Mr. Edwards he would take it into consideration; and assured him he should have some help before long. He felt, however, very much perplexed and discomfited on this occasion. There were few afflictions he dreaded so much as that of being obliged to exert himself.

As he walked down the street, wishing Edwards would not be so unaccountably lazy, and wondering what he should do, some fine nuts caught his eye, that were exposed for sale in a cottage window; he bought some—and was *comforted*. He was very fond of good things in general, and of these in particular; and while he sat on a seat upon the cricket-ground, cracking his nuts, he forgot his troubles; at least, they did

not oppress him. There were few of the evils of life, for which an apple, a nut, and especially a good dinner, would not afford him temporary relief. And if this *real interest* in the sweet and the savory were peculiar to persons of no higher intellectual pretensions than Mr. Frederick Robinson, it would not be at all unaccountable.

But when both the feast and the sport were over, and he was returning late in the afternoon through the village street, the lights in his shop window brought it again to his remembrance. At supper time he appeared full of thought: Elizabeth did not take suppers; she was reading the newspaper, at the further end of the room.

'I say, Elizabeth!' said he, all on a sudden, as soon as he had finished supper.

Elizabeth looked up from the newspaper.

'There 's one thing that I have been going to speak of ever since we have been here; and it 's what I hope you 'll not make any piece of work nor opposition about, because it 's absolutely, indispensably necessary.'

'What is that, pray?' said Elizabeth.

'I must say, then,' continued he, 'that this is the first business I ever was in, in my life, where the mistress — where the lady, did not use to go in sometimes when she was wanted.'

'What do you mean, Mr. Robinson?' said Elizabeth.

'I mean what I say,' replied he; 'I mean that

it is a sin and a shame, to see a woman sitting all day long in her parlour, doing of work and nonsense, when there 's a shop full of customers that want to be waited on. Why, there was Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Johnson, and—'

'Gracious goodness!' exclaimed Elizabeth, 'this exceeds all—every thing! I really did not imagine—I confess I had not the smallest idea that any one—that you, even *you*, Mr. Robinson, would ever have thought of proposing such a thing!'

'Bless my heart, Betsy! what a riot for nothing! I say then, whatever you may think of it, something must be done. There 's Edwards this very day been giving *of* me warning, because he has so much upon his hands, and nobody to help him. As for me, you know very well that I am confined from morning to night to the counting-house, and can't stir: and I see plainly the business is going to ruin—and my uncle will lay all the blame upon me; and all because of your pride and nonsense.'

'If there is so much business that one servant is not sufficient, pray why cannot you keep another?' said Elizabeth. 'Oh!' added she, falling into a violent fit of weeping, 'when I left my dear, dear father's house, how little I thought of all I was to suffer!'

Her husband was always frightened when she went into hysterics, and he thought she was go-

bedside, her countenance glowing with health and cheerfulness; and she said,

'Dear Elizabeth, I heard you were ill, and I am come to nurse you.'

Elizabeth started up without speaking a word; and throwing her hot arms around Emily's neck, continued to weep a long time, with a plaintive, piteous weak cry, upon her bosom.

'Dear, dear Elizabeth!' said Emily.

It was so long since she had heard the accents of kindness, that the soothing tones of Emily's voice quite overwhelmed her.

'I did not think there was any one in the world that cared for me now,' she said, at length.

'Oh, you have never been forgotten by your *friends*,' said Emily. 'I should have come to see you long before this, if I had been sure you would have liked it. But we will not talk much to-night, dear Elizabeth;—let me try now to make you a little comfortable,' said she; and taking off her hat and pelisse, she proceeded quietly to smooth the tumbled pillow, and restore the littered room to neatness and comfort.

She next went to prepare a cooling beverage for the night, into the disorderly kitchen; where the maid and the shopman were carousing over a blazing fire.

Elizabeth took readily, and with confidence, what Emily had made for her; said it was 'very pleasant;' and soon after she sunk into a quiet sleep.

Emily sat up with her friend that night; and when she had done all that was requisite for her, she went to the book-shelves for something to read. She first took down Elizabeth's morocco Bible: and she sighed to see that it had the appearance of an *unused* book.

Emily, since they last parted, was improved in her appearance, but still more in her mind: it was now under the settled, habitual influence of religion.

Her faults, though not extirpated, were subdued; and her once uncertain virtues shone out with the steady light of Christian graces. Her good-nature was now charity—her sensibility, benevolence—her modesty, humility—her sprightliness, cheerfulness.

She found that in many of her intellectual indulgences there was much selfishness, and little use; and her frequent abstractions from the common affairs of life had in great measure given place to a cheerful performance of its quiet duties, and a ready attention to the wants and interests of others. She had lost much of her romance, but her taste was rectified: she had fewer ecstasies, but more happiness.

For several days after Emily's arrival, Elizabeth continued so ill, that little conversation passed between them but what related to her present wants and sufferings. When she began to amend, the effects of her disorder, and the return-

[illegible] on their misfortunes, produced [illegible] irritable fretfulness, which Emily's incessant [illegible] was unable to soothe; and she [illegible] with nervousness, and almost with [illegible] every effort to enliven her, or to engage her in conversation.

Emily's eyes filled with tears, whenever she contemplated the alteration that illness and unhappiness had made in her late blooming and brilliant countenance: and she fervently wished and prayed, that her friend might be led to seek for that consolation, of which she still appeared to be wholly destitute.

Having once the Bible open in her hand, Emily ventured to say,

'Would you like me to read aloud a little while?' But Elizabeth looked at her reproachfully, and said,

'No, no, I cannot bear it—pray do not disturb me!'

Emily shut the book, and gazed at her with heartfelt pity.

One morning, as soon as she arose, Elizabeth's spirits revived on finding herself decidedly better; for in spite of other trials, the first feelings of returning health will be feelings of happiness.

When Emily came in, she found her for the first time disposed to enter into conversation, and to tell her of her troubles: for when people begin suddenly to *talk* of their misfortunes, it is gene-

rally in consequence of some temporary alleviation of their pressure.

'Oh, Emily!' said she, 'I have been too ill to talk to you: but you do not know how unhappy I am. You see, indeed, what a situation I am in —*what* a situation! Oh! my happiness is sacrificed—sacrificed for ever!'

'Indeed I feel for you deeply, dear Elizabeth,' said Emily, after hearing her expatiate upon her grievances. 'How glad I should be if I could comfort you!'

'There is no comfort for me, Emily: can there be any thing in my circumstances that could possibly afford me the smallest degree of pleasure?'

'Not *pleasure*, perhaps,' replied Emily; 'but is it not possible to be happy—to be contented, at least—without pleasure?'

'Oh, do not take up my words,' said Elizabeth; 'I really don't understand those nice distinctions. If you will not allow that I have cause to be miserable, it is because you never knew what it is to be unfortunate.'

'I know you have much need of patience and of resignation,' said Emily: 'but, Elizabeth, I have myself seen instances of people being really happy, who have had, perhaps, as much as you have to endure.'

'Yes, I know very well what you mean: but as to religion, it would never, I am confident, make any particular difference to me, if I were to give

myself ever so much concern about it. Now you are exactly the kind of person to be very religious: and I am not at all surprised that you view it in that particular kind of way that some people do.'

'Indeed you are mistaken,' replied Emily; 'so far from being naturally disposed to it, it is impossible you should feel more averse to religion—real religion—than I did, nor more difficulty in it: and I *should* always have remained as ignorant and as indifferent as I used to be, if God had not made me willing, and given me the desire to seek Him. And He will give it *you* if you ask for it: and then—oh, *do* believe it, Elizabeth!—then you would be happy; happier a thousand times here, in this humble solitude, than all the splendors of the world could make you.'

'But even if I were ever so—so devotional, and all that,' said Elizabeth, 'I am persuaded it would only continue so long as I am deprived of other things: I am certain I should never care particularly about religion, if I had any thing else to take pleasure in.'

'Yes, if you had once felt the happiness of loving and serving God, you would prefer it to all other pleasures,' said Emily.

'It may make some people happy, and it does you, I dare say,' replied Elizabeth; 'but as for me, I really do not believe it ever would: indeed I feel a dislike to the thought of the thing; and

to confess the truth, I always did, even at the time that I was hearing and seeing so much of it.'

'And so did I—and so does every one,' replied Emily, 'until a *new* heart, and a *right* spirit is given: and this is what we must pray for. But oh! do not let us talk of religion as a thing we may choose or refuse like an accomplishment, according to our particular taste: we *must* be religious—we *must* come to Jesus Christ for salvation, and love God and His service, and learn *not to love the world*—or we must perish. And what should prevent you? God is not willing that any should perish.'

'I do assure you,' said Elizabeth, after a short pause, 'that sometimes since I have been in this miserable place, I have wished I were religious; but I know that it is quite impossible I ever should be.'

'Impossible! oh no; it is impossible that such faint wishes should make you so; but with God every thing is possible; and if you sincerely desire, and earnestly ask *His* help, you *will* receive it.'

'You do not know my heart,' said Elizabeth, 'it is very different from yours.'

'If God had not promised to change the heart, I must have despaired as well as you; but He will.'

'What, *my* heart?' said Elizabeth.

During the latter part of this conversation, there was an appearance of sincerity and solicitude in Elizabeth, that Emily had never observed in her on any former occasion. She did not, however, continue it much longer at that time, lest she should be wearied; but she was overjoyed to find that for the two or three following days Elizabeth appeared willing, and almost anxious, to renew it.

During this visit, Emily had many opportunities of observing the neglected and declining state of the business. She had even heard Mr. Robinson making some lazy complaints of the discouraging state of his affairs. In writing to her father she had mentioned this, and expressed an earnest wish that some situation could be devised for them that would be less irksome to Elizabeth, and more likely to secure their permanent comfort. Very soon after, she had the satisfaction of receiving a letter from Mr. Grey, offering — provided it met with Mr. Robinson's approbation — to use his interest in endeavoring to procure for him the situation, then vacant, of superior clerk in a concern with which he was remotely connected. The salary, he said, was handsome, and the place considered respectable. An immediate answer was required, and Emily lost no time in submitting it to Mr. Robinson's consideration.

Most people, and especially idle people, ex-

pect to be better by a change of circumstances, and he accepted the offer without hesitation.

Emily found Elizabeth employed in reading the Bible, when she entered her room to communicate the contents of this letter.

'I am sorry to interrupt you,' said she, 'but here is something'—offering her the letter—'that perhaps will give you a little pleasure.'

'My dear girl!' cried Elizabeth, when she had hastily read it, 'how shall I ever repay you and your dear, good father for this kindness? Why this is the very thing for Robinson—let me see—what does it say?—"the place considered respectable"—that means genteel of course: oh, Emily,' said she, shutting the Bible, and rising briskly from her chair, 'I feel quite well and happy!'

'But recollect, it is still very uncertain,' said Emily.

'Not *very* uncertain, my dear, surely; your father here speaks confidently, almost, does not he?—"think it not unlikely my application may be successful."'

'Not unlikely, but he is not at all sure, you see,' said Emily. 'I am almost sorry I told you now,' added she, as she looked at Elizabeth's animated and eager countenance, in which the *world* had already regained its recently banished expression.

'Dear, it would have been cruel not to have told me,' said Elizabeth.

'But if you *should* be disappointed,' resumed Emily, 'you would *now*, I hope, know how to submit, and where to seek consolation.'

'Yes, indeed, I hope I should,' replied Elizabeth.

'It is the only satisfaction,' continued Emily, 'to commit such concerns cheerfully to Providence, knowing they will be overruled for our real good; it must, I should think, prevent all distressing anxiety.'

'Very true,' answered Elizabeth. 'Emily,' said she, after a short silence, 'I wonder what your father means by "a *handsome* salary"—have you any idea, my dear, what it would be?'

'No, indeed, I never heard,' said Emily, sighing: and she almost regretted that the application had been made.

Nothing was now talked of but the expected appointment; and Emily found, with deep concern, that it was in vain to attempt engaging Elizabeth in the conversations which had lately seemed to interest and affect her. She either answered with indifference, or, what was still more painful to Emily, and discouraged her most from attempting it—she adopted her old artificial manner, in talking about religion.

After only a week's suspense, a letter arrived

from Mr. Grey, to inform them that his application in behalf of Mr. Robinson had been *unsuccessful*.

Elizabeth was busy at her drawers examining some dresses, which till now had not seen the light since she came to Hilsbury, when Emily, with a heavy heart, entered with her father's letter. She put it into her hand, and withdrew in silence.

Mr. Robinson's disappointment was more vociferous, but less acute, than Elizabeth's. In her mind a relish for the world had been aroused too actively to subside again with the hopes that excited it. She was first stunned, then irritated, by the intelligence. She referred again and again to the unwelcome letter; but still the decisive words, 'unsuccessful application,' left her nothing to hope.

She had not learned to *acquiesce* in adversity, and at first refused to believe that she must actually submit to it. If *this* plan had failed, *something* she thought might be done: and her mind ranged with impatient ingenuity from scheme to scheme, as each appeared more impracticable than the former: till at last she was compelled to believe, that there was nothing before her but submitting to present circumstances. When after a long train of thought she arrived at this conclusion, she again burst into a passionate fit of impatient sorrow.

When Emily joined her, she did not attempt to offer ill-timed reflections; they passed the greatest part of the day in silence; and it was not till Elizabeth had recovered from the surprise of disappointment, that she began to recollect there was still *one* way of being happy that was not unattainable.

How many are driven to religion as a last refuge, who would never have chosen it as the first good!

As they were sitting together in the evening, Elizabeth broke a long silence by saying, in a voice between penitence and peevishness,

'Is not this exactly what I told you—that I should never care about religion if I had any thing besides to take an interest in?—I have scarcely given it a thought the last week, Emily, and now what is there but that to comfort me?'

'Oh, Elizabeth! then is not this a happy disappointment? be thankful that you were not *abandoned* to prosperity.'

'But now,' said Elizabeth, 'now that I have been again as unconcerned, and indifferent, and ungrateful as ever—how can I hope to be forgiven?'

'God's ways are not like ours,' answered Emily; 'His invitations are made to the unconcerned and the ungrateful. But when we have refused to surrender our hearts to Him till they have made trial of every other object, it should make us

more humble and more thankful, that He will at last accept such a worthless, ungenerous gift.'

The tears were starting in Elizabeth's eyes while Emily was speaking: and when a little more had passed, she thought it best to leave her alone, and silently withdrew.

Elizabeth had sometimes said her prayers, but she had never *prayed;* and she now for the first time felt a real desire to do so. As soon as Emily was gone, she sunk down by the bed-side; she wept, but was unable to utter a word; overwhelmed with the strange, glowing feeling of *sincerity*, and with the new and mighty effort to express a deep, inward sentiment, to a Being invisible, and hitherto wholly unknown.

They who do not know that prayer is an effort requiring all the energies of body and mind, may question whether they ever have prayed.

After awhile, she knew not how long, Elizabeth rose up from her knees, exhausted, but yet relieved.

When Emily returned to her, she was struck with an expression of meekness and *reality* in her countenance, that was not natural to it.

'Emily,' said she, in a faltering voice, 'I have been attempting to — pray! but I cannot.'

'Then I believe you *have* prayed, dear Elizabeth,' said Emily. 'It is only in *real* prayer that there is any difficulty: it was easy to *say* our prayers, as we used to do: but now you feel the

difference between that formal service, and calling upon God in spirit and in truth.'

To Elizabeth, however, although a desire and a hope had suddenly sprung up in her mind, that gave her a new and strange sense of satisfaction, the difficulties in her way appeared at first insurmountable. Nor was it surprising that to a person of her character, religion, as it now appeared to her—an inward, heart-felt, all-pervading principle—should seem an almost unattainable good.

A single glance at its reality convinced her, that those things must be sacrificed to it from which she had ever derived her choicest gratifications. It was not so much that any particular pursuits were to be relinquished—this had been the least and lightest sacrifice; but the inmost recesses of her heart must yield up their long secreted idolatries.

If 'the rich can scarcely be saved,' how shall the vain? For who that knows his own heart but must acknowledge, that it were easier to resign his wealth than to mortify his vanity? 'How can ye believe, who receive honor one of another?' was said by Him, 'who knew what was in man.' And surely, if any one principle of depraved nature may be considered as more than another directly opposed to the Christian temper, it is that self-seeking, and self-display, which has human admiration for its object.

For the being who throughout the course of a

vain life has never acted in conformity to the will of God, but with a slavish regard to the opinion of its fellow creatures — whose shallow virtues even are become artificial, from being habitually used as articles of display—whose infirmities and sins have been set off as interesting and captivating—whose very devotions must be *picturesque:* for such a being to sit *unseen,* and learn at the feet of Jesus—to study in every thought, word, and action, the eye of Him who is invisible—to act, speak, and think, only in simplicity, integrity, and singleness of heart—to substitute inward graces for outward attractions — silent charities for showy sensibilities—to bring every action, and every motive, into subjection to Him who seeth the thoughts and intents of the heart:—and when all is done, to be humble still; not even to make a display of humility and devotion, but to acknowledge that a disposition to do so betrays the want of both: all this must appear absolutely unattainable, until the inquiring mind is instructed to look beyond its own efforts, and to depend on Him to whom this and 'all things are possible.'

It was *then* that Elizabeth first perceived, that the unfavorable propensities of her character were not insurmountable obstacles to her becoming a Christian. She then saw, that whatever her natural dispositions might have been, the operations of Omnipotence would have been not less

requisite. The change would be as *real*, though it had been less conspicuous.

A mind may be naturally unearthly and refined, serious and contemplative—and, in a sense, even devotional: it may love to speculate upon mortality and futurity; and may be in the view of itself and of others, as Elizabeth expressed it—'just the sort of mind to be very religious;' that is, amiable, and intellectual: but it cannot become *holy* and *spiritual* without the same almighty energy that must be exerted to renovate the worldly or the indolent, the selfish and the vain

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CHAPTER XV.

If Elizabeth's religion had expended itself in words and emotions, it would have been, as before, of a very doubtful character. But she soon gave the best evidence of its reality, by her anxiety to bring her daily conduct under its universal influence. She had, however, at present much to subdue, and much to learn.

She and Emily had many conversations on the subject of her future conduct.

'I believe,' said Elizabeth, as they were talking of these things one evening, 'that I could be happy now in a cottage—almost in any situation, especially with a companion I could love: but the business—the trade—I cannot tell you, Emily, how unpleasant it is to me; only I hope I am now willing—more willing, at least, to submit to what is unpleasant.'

'But in time,' said Emily, 'may not you become almost reconciled even to this? especially if you *could* so far overcome your reluctance as to take an interest in it yourself: and you are so clever, and have so much taste, that—'

'Dear, do you think so?' interrupted Elizabeth.

'That I am sure,' continued Emily, 'Mr. Rob-

inson would soon find an alteration in his affairs, if you were once to attend to them.'

'But then there 's Robinson! Emily, you know I *cannot* love him.'

'Cannot you?' said Emily. 'But yet,' added she, after a long pause, 'I have thought sometimes, you might treat him with a little more respect and—kindness, and then perhaps—'

'I know it—yes, I know I ought; and I *will* endeavor,' said she: and here the conversation ended; for the time was come which Elizabeth now regularly devoted to her evening retirement.

She had learned the pleasure and privilege of daily 'entering into her chamber, and shutting to the door:'—and it was *there* she could best fortify herself for any self-denying resolution. But in doing so, she was a wonder to herself. That *she* should find happiness in *such* engagements—that an hour spent in meditation and prayer should to *her* be the happiest of the day—

> 'Strange were those tones, to *her* those tears were strange,
> She wept, and wonder'd at the mighty change.'

That night Mr. Robinson came in to supper with a gloomy countenance. Every thing was going wrong. Business dull—money scarce—Edwards saucy—but what really oppressed him most of all was the weight of his own indolence.

When Elizabeth came down from her room,

she had evidently been in tears, but she did not look gloomy, and going towards her husband, she said,

'Are you tired to-night?'

'Rather, my dear—not very, though, thank you,' said he, unfolding his arms, and brightening up at the unexpected attention.

While they were at supper, after two or three unsuccessful efforts to speak, Elizabeth at length said,

'Mr. Robinson, you spoke to me some time ago about assisting you in the shop: I refused then, but now I have determined to do it; and I intend to begin as soon—' and her voice faltered—'as soon as I am well enough to stand in the cold.'

'Dear me! will you?' said her husband in unfeigned astonishment.

But Elizabeth, overcome by the effort she had made, burst into tears, and could not reply.

'But I would not have you to do it upon any account, if it frets you thus,' added he.

'O she is not fretting,' said Emily, 'she likes it, only—' and here she stopped, at a loss how to make Mr. Robinson comprehend why any body should *cry* at what they *like*.

'I shall be of very little service at first,' resumed Elizabeth, in a firmer voice; 'but I hope I shall learn in time; and as your sister is coming, and you find Edwards so inattentive and

troublesome, I think it would be best to part with him, and we will endeavor to manage the business among ourselves.'

'Well, I assure you I shall be glad enough to get rid of that idle dog: that is, if you really intend it, my dear,' said he.

'Yes, I really intend it,' said Elizabeth.

And she retired to rest this night, with a calm sense of self-approval that she had seldom known. It was the genuine pleasure with which most instances of self-denial are rewarded—the pure satisfaction of sacrificing inclination to principle.

The next day, while they were at dinner, the stage coach, which once a week passed through the village, drove by their window; and Mr. Robinson started up, exclaiming,

'There 's my sister Becky!'—and immediately set off to receive her.

'I wonder what sort of a being she is,' said Elizabeth.

'We shall soon see,' said Emily.

In a few minutes Mr. Robinson returned, laden with packages; and introduced his sister to the ladies.

Elizabeth held out her hand to one of far less delicate texture, and endeavored to receive her new relation with cordiality: but Miss Rebecca's first appearance was not prepossessing. She was a plain person, much marked with the small-pox, and appeared about forty years of age. Her dress

was far from untidy; but it showed that total deficiency of taste, which is betrayed by some persons, who without much ambition to be *smart*, would yet fain appear a little like other people: besides, she was now in her travelling *déshabille*. But when she spoke, there was a softness in her voice, and a propriety in her mode of expressing herself, that instantly made a favorable impression.

For a person in Miss Rebecca's circumstances to conduct herself with exact propriety towards such a sister-in-law as Elizabeth, would not appear very easy; but she seemed to understand this secret to perfection. There was a certain independence in her character, that made her feel at ease, and enabled to retain her self-possession on every occasion. Although fully conscious of her own inferiority in those respects, she was not to be overawed by such things as wealth, beauty, or elegance in others. Her behavior was uniformly obliging, courteous, and respectful; but it was never servile—never for a moment—to the grandest carriage customer that ever entered her uncle's shop.

Elizabeth took some pains to check the feeling of contemptuous pity, which the first appearance of her new relation had excited.

But she soon found that this effort was quite unnecessary. A person of good nature, sound sense, and consistent piety — and *who makes no*

absurd pretensions—is not so easily despised as people may imagine. Miss Rebecca answered this description; and Elizabeth had not spent many hours in her society, before she found that she absolutely commanded her respect.

As they became better acquainted, Elizabeth and Emily were surprised to perceive how far removed she was from vulgar ignorance. This discovery, however, was not made by her introducing the names of all the books, and quoting all the authors she could recollect, on the first day of her arrival, but by the general superiority and intelligence of her conversation.

She had been in the habit of reading as much as her engagements would permit, from the honest desire of improving her mind, not with the most remote intention of making it a subject of vulgar boast. In the course of her life she had waited upon many a well-dressed supercilious customer, to whom it would have been in her power to have imparted some useful information; but she never felt disposed to make an unbecoming advantage of her acquisitions. If her mind was superior to her station, it did not disqualify her for its duties, nor lead her to despise them; for her little stock of knowledge had been turned to the best account; it had made her not vain, but wise—not ridiculous, but respectable.

There was no one who ever had so much influence over Frederick Robinson as his sister.

While he was at his uncle's he was continually embroiled in some dispute with his cousins, or the apprentices, or the servants. A consciousness of his own weakness made him exceedingly tenacious of his rights and privileges, and jealous of his dignity: so that he was always imagining the one invaded, and the other insulted. In these disputes his sister Rebecca was the universal peace-maker; every one was willing to appeal to her; and even Frederick would submit to her decisions.

Since her arrival he had been unusually attentive to business; and the scraping of the violin was rarely heard till shop was shut in the evening. Indeed, in three days after she came, every thing wore a different aspect. Without bustle or parade, her pervading management had restored order in the counting house, the shop, and the kitchen. Her attentive and obliging manner to the customers was soon noised abroad; and many who had been offended by the neglect of the master, and impertinence of the man, began to return.

Elizabeth was not more agreeably disappointed in her sister-in-law, than Miss Rebecca was in her. She listened with tears of joy, while Emily related the change which had recently taken place in her friend's mind: and Emily was rejoiced, when she became acquainted with her character, to commit Elizabeth's yet weak and

fluctuating principles to her superintendence. Young as she herself was in Christian knowledge, she was glad to be relieved from the burden of such responsibility, and to consign it to one on whose experience and judicious management she could so well rely.

When she had done this, Emily took leave of Elizabeth; her heart glowing with joy and gratitude, as she contemplated the unexpected issue of her visit.

Elizabeth, who had dreaded the familiarity of a vulgar relation, was the more touched by the true delicacy of Miss Rebecca's manner towards her.

A fair form and delicate complexion—much as our ungodly wish to believe it—are not the invariable indications of a delicate mind; while it often happens that this jewel is concealed within a plain, unpromising exterior.

When Elizabeth witnessed how much might be effected by activity and management, she was strengthened in her determination to remain no longer a useless incumbrance in her own household: and having made an ingenuous confession of her ignorance, she requested to be instructed in all the mysteries of domestic economy. Miss Rebecca undertook this task with perfect simplicity. She took great pains in instructing her, without suffering her to feel it a mortification to be taught.

Emily had not flattered her, in saying that Elizabeth was clever. Her talents had hitherto been exercised to one unproductive end; but now she felt the pleasure of exerting them usefully and honorably; and she made rapid progress, not only in the attainment of those things of which she might feel ashamed of being ignorant, but also in her knowledge of the business, her ignorance of which was no disgrace.

It required, however, an effort—and an effort of something better than philosophy—on the morning she went in to take her first lesson behind the counter. Still pale from the effects of her recent illness, she appeared wrapped in a large shawl; but as she entered the shop, a deep glow passed over her cheeks. Miss Rebecca did not feel less on this occasion than Elizabeth, but she contrived to be quite engaged at the time with a customer, and did not seem to notice her as she walked round and took her station by her side.

A country girl happened to come in at the same instant, who, addressing herself to Miss Rebecca, said,

'I want a yard and three-quarters of—your servant, miss," said she, perceiving Elizabeth, and dropping a curtsey.

'What did you want, pray?" said Elizabeth, graciously.

While she was showing the article inquired for, Elizabeth observed that her customer's at-

tention was diverted from that to herself: she was glancing at her, and at her dress; and seemed admiring the white hands that were unrolling the ribands, still more than the bright, glossy articles themselves. When Elizabeth had dismissed her first customer, she whispered with a smile to Miss Rebecca, 'Really it 's not half so disagreeable as I expected!'

Elizabeth's good principles were too recently implanted to have attained the force of habits; and she found a constant reference to them necessary upon every fresh occasion. The exercise of patience, self-denial, forbearance, humility, was new and difficult. Indeed, had other dispositions, or better education, rendered them of easier attainment, the strength and reality of her piety had been less apparent. It was in no instance more so than in her conduct towards her husband. She was solicitous not only to fulfil her ordinary duties towards him, but to win him to partake of that happiness which she herself enjoyed.

'If religion,' she said, 'were to do as much for him as it has for me, we might be most happy together.' And it was especially with this view that she endeavored to subdue the constant propensity she felt to treat him with harshness or indifference.

'That tiresome violin!' said she, one evening, as they caught its distant sound from the counting-house.

'I must say, however,' said his sister, 'that he does not suffer it to be very troublesome to us; I do not remember ever seeing it brought into the parlor.'

'No, I confess he has never done that,' said Elizabeth.

'Do you think,' she resumed, after a long silence, 'do you think he would be pleased if I were sometimes to ask him to play to me?'

'That he would, I am certain,' said his sister.

That her resolution might not have time to relax, she went out immediately, and opening the door of the counting-house, said, good-naturedly,

'Mr. Robinson, you keep it all to yourself; why don't you come and play to us sometimes?'

'Dear me! I am sure I had no idea you would like to hear me play; why, it 's what I should like of all things,' said he, gathering up the music-books, and proceeding briskly to the parlor.

'What shall I play to you now?' said he, in high good humor, 'any thing you like, only say.'

His sister chose something she thought Elizabeth would prefer; and Elizabeth, pleased with herself, found her spirits enlivened even by her husband's bad fiddling; and the evening passed more cheerfully than usual.

Accustomed to be despised, and to be thwarted, he was always particularly gratified by any mark of attention or compliance; and a little

such kindness and consideration produced the happiest effects upon his temper. It was in this way—and it was the only one practicable—that his sister recommended Elizabeth to attempt to acquire an influence over him. He had always been proud of his wife, and would have loved her, after *his* manner, if she would have permitted it; and now that her conduct towards him was so much altered, he began to be '*very fond of her indeed.*'

Miss Rebecca did not offer to leave Hilsbury till she had the satisfaction of seeing her brother's affairs in a very different state to that in which she had found them. The business was increasing; he himself appeared disposed to take some interest in it; and as for Elizabeth, she was become both willing and able to superintend and conduct their concerns.

But she had derived still more important advantages from her sister's society: herself an experienced Christian, she had led Elizabeth on step by step, as she was able to bear it, till she saw her making real progress both in the knowledge and practice of religion.

Having thus spent three useful months with them, she was at length obliged to take leave.

They parted with mutual affection and regret: and Elizabeth was left alone to manage her house, her business, her husband, and—herself.

CHAPTER XVI.

One morning in the spring, a carriage stopped at Mr. Robinson's door.

Emily was the first who sprang out of it: and she was followed by the whole party from Stokely.

Elizabeth colored high as she advanced from behind the counter to receive them. But their easy, affectionate salutation quickly relieved her embarrassment. She led the way to her little parlor. Mr. Leddenhurst, as he followed her, looked neither to the right hand nor the left, but steered his way through the piles of goods that stood in the shop, and stooped beneath the festoons of drapery that decorated the passage door, as though he saw them not.

As this narrative is so near its conclusion, it may be imagined that the Leddenhursts were come to announce to Elizabeth some sudden change of fortune; or, perhaps, to make her a present of one:—but no; they were only come for the pleasure of seeing her—for the pleasure of seeing *Elizabeth* happy in obscurity.

They were affected by the striking alteration in her whole appearance since they last met. Simple in her dress—*almost* artless in her man-

comforts of life:—it was 'a hope, full of immortality;' and enabled her 'in whatever state she was, therewith to be content.'

During their visit, Elizabeth took her friends over her neat, orderly house: and into her pretty retired garden, which was now looking gay with spring flowers.

'You would be surprised,' said she, 'to see how many little pleasures I have now: and that from things which I never took any real pleasure in before. Even my taste is improved by religion: I am not so selfish—so engrossed in—' but here she checked herself, and began to speak of something else. Talking of *herself*, she observed, was particularly hazardous; and she found it a good rule never to do so—not even to speak of her faults unless it was unavoidable.

While Mr. Leddenhurst and Mr. Robinson were gone aside to transact some business, Elizabeth and her friends conversed still more unreservedly.

'I assure you,' said she, looking on the carpet, 'I am happier in all respects than I ever expected to be;—Mr. Robinson is really much more—much less—much improved. Dear Emily,' she added, 'I often, very often, think of that dreary, feverish night, when you came to nurse and comfort me: from that I date all my happiness!'

'Let us rather both think,' said Emily, 'of that happy day that brought our friends to Stokely; it is to *them* we both owe every thing that is good.'

'We can all now,' said Miss Weston, 'look back to the time when we were unacquainted with God, and with ourselves,—when religion was uninteresting to us; and to whatever circumstances we may trace the wondrous change, let us acknowledge *Him* as the sole and gracious author of it.'

'And now, sir,' said Mr. Leddenhurst, when they returned to the ladies, 'we hope to prevail upon you to part with Mrs. Robinson, before long, to pay us a visit at Stokely.'

'To be sure I will,' replied he, 'with a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Leddenhurst; she deserves a little recreation now, as well as any woman in the world; and I 'll be bound to say, that there 's no place whatever where it would give Mrs. Robinson so much pleasure to pay a visit to.'

'It would, indeed, give me a great deal of pleasure,' said Elizabeth; 'I have nowhere such kind friends; I should like, too, to visit Broadisham once again; if it were only to think of all that has passed since I last drove out of it.'

'Ah, that was on our wedding-day?' said her husband.

'Then you will come, my dear,' said Mrs. Leddenhurst.

'Yes, she has promised,' said Emily.

Her friends now took an affectionate leave of Elizabeth. Before the carriage drove off, they all looked out at her as she stood by her husband's side at the shop-door. There was a tear in her eye, but she strove to conceal it; and her countenance shone with content.

'This is a sight,' said Mr. Leddenhurst, 'worth coming more than fifteen miles to see:—the subjugation of a propensity that I had almost thought incurable; and I believe that nothing but *religion* will cure the love of — DISPLAY."

ESSAYS IN RHYME,

ON

MORALS AND MANNERS.

BY THE LATE

JANE TAYLOR.

"Par l'étude, par l'art suprême,
Sur un froid pupitre amaigris,
D'autres orneront leurs écrits;
Pour moi, dans cette gêne extrême,
Je verrois mourir mes esprits;
On n'est jamais bien que soi-même
Et me voilà tel que je suis." *Gresset.*

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PREJUDICE.

In yonder red-brick mansion, tight and square,
Just at the town's commencement, lives the mayor.
Some yards of shining gravel, fenced with box,
Lead to the painted portal—where one knocks:
There, in the left-hand parlor, all in state,
Sit he and she, on either side the grate.
But though their goods and chattels, sound and new,
Bespeak the owner's *very well to do*,
His worship's wig and morning suit betray
Slight indications of an humbler day.

That long, low shop, where still the name appears,
Some doors below, they kept for forty years:
And there, with various fortunes, smooth and rough,
They sold tobacco, coffee, tea, and snuff.
There labelled drawers display their spicy row,—
Clove, mace, and nutmeg: from the ceiling low
Dangle long *twelves* and *eights*, and slender rush,
Mixed with the varied forms of *genus brush*;
Cask, firkin, bag, and barrel, crowd the floor,
And piles of country cheeses guard the door.

The frugal dames came in from far and near,
To buy their ounces and their quarterns here.
Hard was the toil, the profits slow to count,
And yet the molehill was at last a mount;
Those petty gains were hoarded day by day,
With little cost, for not a child had they;
Till, long proceeding on the saving plan,
He found himself a *warm, 'forehanded man:*
And being now arrived at life's decline,
Both he and she, they formed the bold design,
(Although it touched their prudence to the quick)
To turn their savings into stone and brick.
How many an ounce of tea and ounce of snuff,
There must have been consumed to make enough!

At length, with paint and paper, bright and gay,
The box was finished, and they went away.
But when their faces were no longer seen
Amongst the canisters of *black* and *green*,
—Those well known faces, all the country round—
'T was said that had they levelled to the ground
The two old walnut trees before the door,
The neighbors scarcely would have missed *them* more.
Now, like two parrots in a golden cage,
They live, and civic honors crown their age:
Thrice, since the Whitsuntide they settled there,
Seven years ago, has he been chosen mayor;
And now you 'd scarcely know they were the same:
Proud in official greatness goes the dame;
But extra stateliness of dress and mein,
During the mayoralty, is plainly seen;
With nicer care bestowed to puff and pin
The august lappet that contains her chin.

Such is her life; and like the wise and great,
The mind has journeyed hand in hand with fate:
Her thoughts, unused to take a longer flight
Than from the left-hand counter to the right,
With little change, are vacillating still,
Between his worship's glory and the till.
The few ideas moving, slow and dull,
Across the sandy desert of her skull,
Still the same course must follow, to and fro,
As first they traversed three-score years ago;
From whence, not all the world could turn them back,
Or lead them out upon another track.
What once was right or wrong, or high or low
In her opinion, always must be so:—
You might, perhaps, with reasons new and pat,
Have made *Columbus* think the world was flat;
There might be times of energy worn out,
When his own theory would *Sir Isaac* doubt;
But not the powers of argument combined
Could make this dear good woman change her mind,
Or give her intellect the slightest clue
To that vast world of things she never knew.
Were but her brain dissected, it would show
Her stiff opinions fastened in a row,
Ranged duly, side by side, without a gap,
Much like the plaiting on her Sunday cap.

It is not worth our while, but if it were,
We all could undertake to laugh at *her;*
Since vulgar prejudice, the lowest kind,
Of course, has full possession of her mind;
Here, therefore, let us leave her, and inquire
Wherein it differs as it rises higher.

—As for the few who claim distinction here,
The [illegible] of our narrow sphere,
We [illegible] a [illegible] measure made
[illegible] assessable to trade.
Where [illegible] a [illegible] or forbidden ground,
I [illegible] [illegible] the bound;—
What [illegible] [illegible] that we choose to make
[illegible] [illegible], and for custom's sake,
[illegible] [illegible] through passing fine)
[illegible] [illegible] the boundary line.
[illegible] [illegible], who for many a year
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and parties here,
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible], and till,
[illegible] [illegible], [illegible], and quadrille)
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of thought, nor views of life,
[illegible] [illegible] than our grocer's wife.
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] be better dress,
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] at the best,—
[illegible] [illegible], [illegible] as time runs by,
[illegible] [illegible], and [illegible] and dry,
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] brought,
[illegible] made [illegible] rank, not [illegible] thought.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] with sudden flight,
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] height:
[illegible] [illegible], with [illegible] high combined,
[illegible] [illegible] specimen of mind.
—[illegible] [illegible] that stand from all mankind aloof,
[illegible] [illegible], or [illegible] reproof:
[illegible], [illegible], [illegible] sears away,
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] that [illegible] its sway:
[illegible], [illegible], penetrating view,
Examines human nature through and through;

But while they notice all the forms absurd
That prejudice assumes among the herd,
And every nicer variation see,
Theirs lies in thinking that themselves are free.

There is a science reason cannot teach;
It lies beyond the depth her line can reach;
It is but taught by Heaven's imparted grace,
The feet of Jesus is the only place;
And they who mental riches largely share,
But seldom stoop to seek their wisdom there.
'Not many mighty' in His train appear;
The simple poor adorn it best;—and here,
While prejudice the mental sight impairs
Of vulgar minds,—'t is like a *beam* in theirs.

Religion, as in common course professed,
Is first a question with them, then a jest:
Quick to discern the ludicrous and base,
With which blind votaries have deformed her face,
Errors, abuses, creeds imposed by man,
Are undistinguished from the Scripture plan.
Rome's proud ambition, tyranny, and fraud,
The Christian standard's bloody deeds abroad,
Priestcraft, the same in every age and clime,
From earliest record to the present time,
Contending parties' never-dying strife,
Each calling vengeance on the other's life,
The wretched hypocrite,—the wild extreme
Of blind fanatics,—the enthusiast's dream,
The lives of those who bear the Christian name,—
Of this, of all, religion bears the blame;
Though these are men who most reject its sway,

And know as little what it means as they.
There 's no abuse within the church's fold,
But what the Bible has itself foretold;
Yet these triumphantly are brought to view,
To prove that word of prophecy untrue.

A cold acknowledgement of one Supreme
Avoids, 't is argued, every wide extreme;
And this, if made by Christian, Turk, or Jew,
Is all the same in His impartial view.
But all beyond this rational degree
Of distant homage to the Deity,—
A firm attachment to the truth *revealed*,
(Truth which with blood the Lord of glory sealed)
Zeal to obey, as well as to adore,—
Is vulger prejudice, and nothing more.
Thus, Christian service, spiritual and free,
They class (with pleased and proud complacency)
With rights impure that pagan India boasts,
The blood-dyed Koran, and the idol hosts;
The cross, perhaps, held up with least respect,
The hated symbol of the hated sect:
That seal which marks it Heaven's appointed way,
They caring nor to read, nor to obey,
—That whoso names that name, must first depart
From all iniquity of life and heart.

Or, should the Christian code from all the rest
Be singled out, and owned to be the best,
The same keen shafts of ridicule are bent
Against its spirit, and its true intent.
Of all that gives it energy bereft,
There are but some mere scraps of ethics left,

Scarce more enlightened than were heard to flow
From *Socrates* and *Plato* long ago:
As though, had Scripture never solved a doubt,
We might have managed vastly well without.

Religion's nature, and its worth, are known
To those by whom it is possessed alone.
The Christian's aims and motives, simple, grand,
The wisest worldlings *cannot* understand:
Those views which worldly principles condemn,
Are so incomprehensible to them,
That they, unanimous in self defence,
Pronounce them mere delusion or pretence;
And prejudice (a favorite word) explains
All that still unaccounted for remains.

Mid the strong course of passion's wonted sway,
What makes the wicked man forsake his way?
Conquers the habits years had rooted in,
All fear subduing but the fear of sin?
And him who toiled for earthly bliss, arise,
Leave all, and lay up treasure in the skies?
These are phenomena that, strange to say,
Religion is presenting every day;
Changes, which they who witness dare not doubt,
Though little heard of by the world without.
The man now goes rejoicing on his way,
With inward peace, and cheerful, though not gay;
Unseen the motives that his path define;
His life is hidden, though his graces shine.
He walks through life's distracting changes now,
With even pace, and with an even brow;
Hears the vain world's tumultuous hue and cry,

Just turns his head, and passes calmly by;
Yet takes his cheerful share when duty draws,
And still is foremost found in mercy's cause.

What works this strange philosophy in him,
Is it misanthropy, or is it whim?
No; 't is the glowing, present sense he feels
Of things invisible, which faith reveals.
And should the man thus walking with his God,
Be one unpolished as the valley's clod,
Should all his science but amount to this,
—To loathe iniquity, and long for bliss,
This is *not* prejudice—or if it be,
'T were well if all were prejudiced as he!

But things to come—the vast unfathomed state
To which death opens instantly the gate,—
Although the thought of that expected change,
Affords the finest intellectual range,
Although that change must soon become our lot,
Whether the subject suit our taste or not,
Although objecters cannot well reply,
That 't is a vulgar prejudice to die,—
The subject seems (howe'er it came to pass)
Avoided much by this enlightened class.

All other themes, whose tendencies appear
To add to our accommodation here,
Every contrivance of contriving men
To make a pleasant three-score years and ten,
—Inventions and improvements, whether made
In science, commerce, agriculture, trade,
The arts, *belles lettres*, politics, finance,

Their value is acknowledged at a glance;
And these are studied, patronised, and taught,
With active diligence,—and so they ought.
But since a moment may—some moment *must*
Consign our interest in them all to dust,
Has not the business of the world to come,
Mid all our thoughts, at least a claim to some?
But these are things mysterious and obscure,
Not tangible, and rational, and sure;
'T is such a vague untenable expanse:—
In short, they mean to wait and take their chance.

Could you but show by demonstration clear
How forms and things invisible appear;
Produce your apparatus, bright and clean,
And try experiments on things unseen;
Rare specimens in due assortment bring,
Of seraph's eyes, and slips of angel's wing,
Or metaphysic air-pumps work, to show
A disembodied soul in *vacuo*;
Then 't were a study worthy of alliance
With any other branch of modern science.
But mere assertion of a future state,
By unknown writers, at a distant date,
If this be all its advocates advance,
It is but superstition and romance.

Thus, mental pride, unsubject to control;
To God a secret enmity of soul;
That stubbornness which scorns to yield assent
To aught unfounded on experiment;
A wretched clinging to the present state,
That loathes to dwell on things beyond its date;

That dread of death which ne'er the thought pursues,
And which the Christian's hope alone subdues,—
Combine a veil of prejudice to place
Between dark reason and the light of grace;
—A prejudice as hopeless as can bind
The meanest, most illiterate of mankind.

Would that the films of error were allowed
But by the vulgar worldling, or the proud!
But this distemper of the moral eye
Never affects it more inveterately,
Than when the *false* of prejudice's view
Is intermingled with a little *true*.
And hence, the conscientious and sincere,
Who know *essential* truth, and hold it dear,
If education (as she doubtless can)
Have formed their souls upon the *narrow* plan,
Permit no notion from its nook to stir:
Most obstinately certain where they err.
Thus are opinions, as received in youth,
Wedged down immovably with slips of truth;
Assured of part, they deem the whole is right;
And what astonishment it would excite,
Should any have the boldness to allege,
That all is rubbish but the golden wedge.
—'T is pity, for the skeptic world without
Produce the *error* to confirm their doubt,
Refusing still the sterling to behold;
And thus the rubbish tarnishes the gold.

There is a tender, captivating glow
Which certain views on certain objects throw:
Taste, and poetic feeling, range alone

A fairy world exclusively their own;
And gather airy delicates that rise
Where'er they turn, unseen by vulgar eyes.
Their dainty aliment serenely floats
On every breeze—they live like gnats on motes.
There they might safely, innocently stray;
But when they come and stand in Reason's way,
They blind her views, demean her princely air,
And do more mischief than their smiles repair.
Why she their interference should restrain,
A simple instance shall at once explain.

When *Paul* the walks of beauteous Athens trod,
To point its children to their 'unknown God,'
If some refined Athenian, passing by,
Heard that new doctrine, how would he reply?
Regarding first, with polished, scornful smile,
The stranger's figure and unclassic style,
And then perceiving the discourse was bent
Against the gods of his establishment,
He would but cast his tutored eye around,
And in that glance he has an answer found:
—Altars and theatres, and sacred groves,
Temples and deities whe'er it roves,
Each long perspective that the eye pervades,
Peopled with heroes, thickening as it fades;
Those awful forms that hold their silent sway,
Matchless in grace, while ages roll away;
There, softly blending with the evening shade,
Less light and less, the airy colonnade;
Here, in magnificence of attic grace,
Minerva's Temple, rising from its base;
Its spotless marble forming to the eye,

A ghostly outline on the deep blue sky:—
'Enough—the doctrine that would undermine
These forms of beauty cannot be divine.'
Thus taste would, doubtless, intercept his view
Of that 'strange thing,' which after all—was true.

When *Luther's* sun arose, to chase away
The 'dim religious light' of Romish day,
Opposing, only, to the mellow glare
Of gold and gems that deck the papal chair,
And each imposing pageant of the church,
Good sense, plain argument, and sound research,—
Here taste, again, would prove a dangerous guide,
And raise a prejudice on error's side.
—Behold the slow procession move along!
The Pontiff's blessing on the prostrate throng;
The solemn service, and the anthem loud,
The altar's radiance on the kneeling crowd:—
Or seek, at summons of the convent bell,
Deep, sacred shades, where fair recluses dwell;
See the long train of white-robed sisters come,
Appearing now—now lost amid the gloom,
Chaunting shrill vespers in the twilight dim,
The plaintive music of the virgin's hymn:—
Then would not taste and fancy join the cry
Against the rude, barbarian heresy,
That sought those sacred walls to overthrow,
And rend the veil from that seducing show?
And yet, according to our present light,
That barbarous, tasteless heretic—was right.

It might not be convenient had we gone
To carry this reflection further on.

—But whether, mid the faint and foggy ray
Of ages past, or at the present day,
Truth's native lustre ever must decline
When human art attempts to make it shine:
—Truth is too strong to need the proffered hand
Of human feebleness to make it stand.

Inveterate prejudice, infirm and blind,
May take possession of an honest mind:
Though weakly yielding to its stubborn sway,
'T is not *determined* to be led astray.
But is there not a sin that must not claim,
Though near of kindred, such a gentle name?
A daring sin, that comes with open face,
To rear its standard in the holy place?
E'en from that day, when some would fain condemn
The works of those who followed not with them,
And for that early spark of party rage
Received reproof designed for every age,
Down to the present noisy moment, when
'T is spirting from the tip of many a pen,—
E'en from that day to this, with ceaseless reign,
Has *party spirit* been the church's bane.

Then, let the verse trace clearly as it can,
The finer features of the party man.
By birth, connexion, interest, pride, or taste,
On one or other side we find him placed;
No matter which, nor is there need to say,
For there he is—and there he means to stay.
That point decided, 't is his second care
To find a reason for his being there;
Some reason that may make a brave defence

Against assaults from truth and common sense;
—Supposing for the present, that his ground
Is not exactly tenable all round.

He, not contented like the vulgar herd
To take his creed on other people's word,
And urged amain, by intellectual pride,
To prove he is not on the weakest side,
His choicest stores of wit and fancy draws,
To prop and beautify the needy cause:
And well do wit and fancy suit *their* end,
Who seek not to *examine*, but *defend*.
His is no simple scrupulous mistake,
Like the weak brother, wrong for conscience' sake;
But prejudice, in him, has had to bind
A knowing, subtle, and enlightened mind.
Hence, at each step, he has to bear along
The secret consciousness of something wrong;
But that suspicion, unavowed of course,
Serves but to nerve his arm with triple force;
Provokes his zeal to lend its utmost aid,
And gives the edge of keenness to his blade.

His mind is formed, as though 't were nature's plan
To cut him out to be a party man,
And send him down, in pity, to his post,
As foremost champion of the weaker host;
Not of that grander, philosophic tone,
That lets all party littleness alone;
But keen, sagacious, armed for quick reply,
And, though not visible to every eye,
Nor from his courteous manner to be guessed—
A dash of gall and wormwood in his breast.

Yet, every harsher quality is graced
With wit and learning, eloquence and taste;
Yes—and as charity delights to say,
Much *self* deceived, and hoping that he may,
While gratifying self, and party spleen,
Squeeze in some love to God and man between.
A show of candor too, at times, is lent,
To add its lustre to his argument:
To those who advocate the favorite notion,
It flows as wide as the Atlantic Ocean;
But towards the heretic who turns it over,
About as narrow as the straits of Dover.

It seems too much for either side to boast
The right in *every* contest, if in most:
Yet, our true partisan, from none withdraws,
But lends his talents out to every cause.
Each new encounter prompt to undertake,
Asking no questions first for conscience' sake:
'T is not for him the right and wrong to sift,
Enough to know *his* party wants a lift;
And, though so hazardous none other can,
He boldly takes the field with—'I'm your man!'

And thus he dares the controversial fray;
Though careful, first of all, to clear away
A little rubbish, till he finds a stone
Just broad enough to set his foot upon.
On that one stone he loudly stamps, to show
How firm a standing-place it is, although
Should he advance a step, or step retire,
He plunges all at once knee-deep in mire.
If thence beat off by some opposing band,

He finds some neighbouring jutment where to stand;
There followed, seeks the old support amain,
Driven off anew—anew slips back again.
A draft board may exemplify the thing;
When chased from post to post, one hapless king,
At length, betakes him to—by marches short,
The double corner as his last resort;
Where long, from square to square he bravely courses,
And stands his ground though robbed of all his forces

Meantime, he trusts the checks his arms receive
But few will hear of—fewer still believe;
Hopes the dry record will be little sought;
And feels a Jesuit-pleasure at the thought.
It seems the choicest secret of his art,
To ward invasion from the weaker part;
To veil all blemishes, and make the most
Of what he has, or thinks he has, to boast.
Of full exposure more than all afraid,
He trusts to neat manœuvres to evade
That thorough search, in every hole and nook,
Which unencumbered truth alone can brook;
And labors hard, by hiding all the traces,
To make us fancy there are no such places.
His fairest movements seem to wear disguise;
His plans are rather politic than wise;
Not to elicit truth, but o'er the dross
To spread a plausible and specious gloss.
But he, who finds it needful, on his part,
To ply the mean artillery of art,
And sharpen every arrow that he draws,
May well suspect the soundness of his cause.
Suspect he may,—but vain that lucid doubt,

Devoid of nobleness to search it out.
—Between the man on controversial ground,
Panting for truth *wherever* it be found,
And him who does but seek it on one side,
There lies a gulf immeasurably wide.

Two brother sportsmen, on a blithesome morn,
Obey the summons of the inspiring horn:
One, predetermined to pursue the chase
Within the limits of a certain space;
The other, glowing with the bold intent,
Lead where it may, to follow up the scent.
—They start the hare—and after many a bound,
Doubling and winding on the aforesaid ground,
She leaps the fence and gains the neighboring mead;
At which our doughty sportsman checks his steed;
Rather than follow boldy on to that,
He stays behind the hedge—and starts a cat;
Pursues poor puss with vast advantage thence,
And has brave sport within his blessed fence.
—Then having clipt and trimmed her, here and there,
Assures the world that *he* has caught the hare;
And should his sporting friends confirm the lie,
Ere there is time to ask the reason why,
A hare—though common sense should stand appall'd—
She was, is now, and ever shall be called.

Meantime, the brother sportsman does not fail
To chase his victim over hill and dale;
The five-barred gate, tall rampart, hedge and ditch,
Alike to him—he leaps, and cares not which:
At length he sees,—nor sees without dismay,
The pack strike off an unexpected way;

The path they take, by *tact* unerring shown,
Must cross a fine enclosure of his own;
The fair plantation, on his favorite grounds,
Is rudely torn and trampled by the hounds:
Safe from attack the sheltered spot appeared;
His fathers raised it, and himself revered:
Though startled, he disdains to call them back,
But leaps, and follows the sagacious pack;
Tramples the ground himself, with noble pride,
And hears the death-cry on the other side;
Secures his prey—content to bear the shame,
If such it be,—for he has got the *game*.

Interest its secret bias may impart,
When least suspected, to an upright heart:
But when a creed and worldly views unite,
Where interest is the *only* rule of right;
Where loaves and fishes—all our goodly show,
Depend on people's thinking so and so;
What pompous, loud, declamatory wrath
The mere expression of a doubt calls forth!
The weight of argument is balanced here
Against so many thousand pounds a year;
—What dreadful, dangerous heresy is taught!
It must be silenced—will not bear a thought!

Is party spirit, therefore, only found
In one enclosure of disputed ground?
No; while *Nathaniels* stand on either side
The boundary lines that differing sects divide,
Unchristian tempers every form may take,
And truth itself be loved for party's sake.

The man whom conscience, less than mental pride
Early enlisted on the opposing side,
Proves that the flames of an unhallowed fire,
Not love to God and man, his zeal inspire.
—Pleased, proud to differ, eloquent to teach
The lesser doctrines that enlarge the breach,
In bold defiance of the Christian rule,
Says to his brother, 'raca,' and 'thou fool;'
Or vainly hopes to violate its laws,
Beneath the sanction of a righteous cause.
Rejoiced, not grieved in spirit, to behold
Abuses thicken in the neighboring fold;
And doubting, grudging, backward to concede
That any sheep within that pasture feed.
Intent his controversial shafts to draw,
He slights the weightier matters of the law;
More prone on points of party strife to dwell,
Than emulous to save a soul from hell.
Yet,—if his soul be free from wilful guile,
Believes he does God service all the while.
But oh! the darkest candidate for bliss,
Who seeking that, spares not a thought for this,
Though much encumbered should his notions be,
Is safer, happier, nearer Heaven than he.

Come, let us rise from party's noisy sphere,
To trace an honest mind in its career;
And see how far true greatness spreads its flight
Above the *cleverness* of party spite.
He, from the regions of a calmer day,
Hears the faint clamor of the distant fray;
Hears but to pity,—while in tranquil mood
He holds his course in happy solitude.

Truth his sole object, this, with simple aim,
He follows, caring little for the name;
Nor with the poor intent to make her stand
And wave his party's ensign in her hand,
Mocking his neighbour's pitiful mistake;
But for her own invaluable sake.

That is the truly philosophic mind,
Which no inferior influence can bind;
Which all endeavors to confine were vain,
Though the earth's orbit were its length of chain.
—Yet not that boldness which delights to break
From what our fathers taught, for license' sake,
Through all dry places wandering, still in quest,
Like lawless fiends, of some unhallowed rest;—
The love of truth is genuine, when combined
With unaffected humbleness of mind.
He values most, who feels with sense acute
His own deep interest in the grand pursuit;
Who heaven-ward spreads his undiverted wing,
Godly simplicity the moving spring.
No meaner power can regulate his flight,
Too much is staked upon his going right.
Dry, heartless speculation may succeed,
Where the sole object is to frame a creed;
The sophist's art may suit their eager quest,
Who only aim to prove *their* creed the best;
But no such views *his* anxious search control,
Who loves the truth because he loves his soul.
Truth is but one with Heaven, in his esteem,
The sparkling spring of life's eternal stream;
And hence, with equal singleness of heart,
He traces out each less essential part:

No worldly motives can his views entice;
He parts with all to gain the pearl of price.

Why is opinion, singly as it stands,
So much inherited like house and lands?
Whence comes it that from sire to son it goes,
Like a dark eyebrow or a Roman nose?
How comes it, too, that notions, wrong or right,
Which no direct affinities unite,
On every side of party ground, one sees,
Clung close together like a swarm of bees?
Where one is held, through habit, form, or force,
The rest are all consented to of course,
As though combined by some interior plot;
Is it necessity, or chance, or what?
Where'er the undiscovered cause be sought,
No man would trace its origin to *thought:*
Then shall we say, with leave of *Dr. Gall,*
It comes to pass from thinking not at all?

Though man a *thinking* being is defined,
Few use the grand prerogative of mind:
How few think justly of the thinking few!
How many never think, who think they do!
Opinion, therefore—such our mental dearth—
Depends on mere locality or birth.
Hence, the warm tory, eloquent and big
With loyal zeal, had he been *born* a whig,
Would rave for liberty with equal flame,
No shadow of distinction but the name.
Hence, Christian bigots, 'neath the pagan cloud,
Had roared for 'great Diana' just as loud;

Or, dropped at Rome, at Mecca, or Pekin,
For *Fo*, the prophet, or the man of sin.

Much of the light and soundness of our creed,
Whate'er it be, depends on what we read.
How many clamor loudly for their way,
Who never heard what others have to say:
Fixed where they are, determined to be right,
They fear to be disturbed by further light;
And where the voice of argument is heard,
Away they run, and will not hear a word.
Form notions vague, and gathered up by chance,
Or mere report, of what you might advance;
Resolve the old frequented path to tread,
And still to think as they were born and bred.

Besides this blind devotion to a sect,
Custom produces much the same effect.
Our desks with piles of controversy groan;
But still, alas! each party's with its own.
Each deems his logic must conviction bring,
If people would but read,—but there 's the thing!
The sermons, pamphlets, papers, books, reviews,
That plead our own opinions, we peruse;
And these alone,—as though the plan had been
To rivet all our prejudices in.
'T is really droll to see how people's shelves,
Go where you will, are labelled like themselves.
Ask if your neighbor—he whose party tone,
Polemic, or political, is known—
Sees such a publication—naming one
That takes a different side, or sides with none;

And straight in flat, uncomfortable-wise,
That damps all further mention, he replies,
'No, sir, we do not see that work—I know
Its general views,—*we* take in so and so.'
Thus each retains his notions, every one,
Thus they descend complete from sire to son;
And hence, the blind contempt so freely shown
For every one's opinions but our own.

How oft from public or from private pique,
Conscience and truth are not allowed to speak:
Reasons might weigh that now are quite forgot,
If such a man or party urged them not;
But oh, what logic strong enough can be,
To prove that *they* have clearer views than *we!*

In times like ours, 't were wise if people would
Well scrutinize their zeal for doing good.
A few plain questions might suffice, to prove
What flows from party—what from Christian love.
—Our prayers are heard—some Mussulman, at last,
Forsakes his prophet—some Hindoo his caste;
Accepts a Saviour, and avows the choice:—
How glad we are, how much our hearts rejoice!
The news is told and echoed, till the tale
Howe'er reviving, almost waxes stale.
—A second convert Gospel grace allures—
Oh, but this time he was not *ours* but *yours;*
It came to pass we know not when or how;
—Well, are we *quite* as glad and thankful now?
Or can we scarce the rising wish suppress,
That *we* were honored with the whole success?

There is an eye that marks the ways of men,
With strict, impartial, analyzing ken:
Our motley creeds, our crude opinions, lie
All, all unveiled to that omniscient eye.
He sees the subtlest shades by error thrown;
Marks where His truth is left to shine alone;
Decides with most exact, unerring skill,
Wherein we differ from His word and will.
No specious names nor reasonings, to His view,
The false can varnish, or deform the true;
Nor vain excuses e'er avail, to plead
The *right* of theory for the *wrong* of deed.
Before that unembarrassed, just survey,
What heaps of refuse must be swept away!
How must its search from every creed remove
All but the golden grains of truth and love!
Yet, with compassion for our feeble powers,
For oh! His thoughts and ways are not as ours.

—There is a day, in flaming terrors bright,
When truth and error shall be brought to light.
But who shall rise, amid the shining throng,
To boast that *he* was right, and *you* were wrong?
When each rejoicing saint shall veil his face,
And none may triumph, but in glorious grace!
No meaner praise shall heavenly tongues employ:
Yet, *they* shall reap the more abundant joy,
Who sought His truth, with simple, humble aim
To do His will, and glorify His name.

EXPERIENCE.

—A COSTLY good! that ne'er was bought or sold
For gem, or pearl, or miser's store, twice told:
Save certain watery pearls, possessed by all,
Which, one by one, may buy it as they fall.
Of these, though precious, few will not suffice,
So slow the traffic, and so large the price!

'T is for the withered form, the pensive face,
Not for bright eyes, and cheeks of blooming grace;
When these have faded, those as dimly shine,
Then, in their stead, Experience may be thine.
Books will assert, and sires and pulpits teach,
And youth may listen to their sober speech,
And smiling lips pronounce a careless 'yes,'
While neither eye nor heart can acquiesce.
But grief extorts conviction; brings to view
Those slighted words, and answers—'very true.'
Surprised, reluctant, yet at last compelled
To own, what long in doubtful scale was held,
That life, whate'er the course our own has led,
Is much the same as what our fathers said.

A tattered cottage, to the view of taste,
In beauty glows, at needful distance placed:
Its broken panes, its richly ruined thatch,
Its gable graced with many a mossy patch,
The sunset lighting up its varied dyes,
Form quite a picture to poetic eyes;
And yield delight, that modern brick and board,
Square, sound, and well arranged, would not afford.
But, cross the mead to take a nearer ken,—
Where all the magic of the vision then?
The picturesque is vanished, and the eye,
Averted, turns from loathsome poverty;
And while it lingers, e'en the sun's pure ray
Seems almost sullied by its transient stay.
The broken walls, with slight repairs embossed,
Are but cold comforts in a winter's frost:
No smiling, peaceful peasant, half refined,
There tunes his reed on rustic seat reclined;
But there, the bending form and haggard face,
Worn with the lines that vice and misery trace.
Thus fades the charm, by vernal hope supplied
To every object it has never tried;
—To fairy visions, and elysian meads,
Thus vulgar, cold reality succeeds.

When sanguine youth the plain of life surveys,
It does not calculate on rainy days.
Some, as they enter on the unknown way,
Expect *large* troubles at a distant day;
—The loss of wealth, or friends they fondly prize;
But reckon not on ills of smaller size,
Those nameless, trifling ills, that intervene,
And people life, infesting every scene;

And there with silent, unavowed success,
Wear off the keener edge of happiness:
Those teasing swarms, that buzz about our joys,
More potent than the whirlwind that destroys;
—Potent, with heavenly teaching, to attest
Life is a pilgrimage, and not a rest.

That lesson, learned aright, is valued more
Than all Experience ever taught before;
For this her choicest secret, timely given,
Is wisdom, virtue, happiness, and heaven.
Long is religion viewed, by many an eye,
As wanted more for safety by and by,
—A thing for times of danger and distress,
Than needful for our present happiness.
But after fruitless, wearisome assays
To find repose and peace in other ways,
The sickened soul—when Heaven imparts its grace
Returns to seek its only resting place;
And sweet Experience proves as years increase,
That wisdom's ways *are* pleasantness and peace;
Yes, and the late conviction, fraught with pain,
On many a callous conscience strikes in vain.

Blind to ourselves,—to others not less blind,
We slowly learn to understand mankind.
Sanguine and ardent, indisposed to hold
The cautious maxims that our fathers told,
We place new objects in the fairest light,
And offer generous friendship at first sight;—
Expect, (though not the firstrate mental powers)
A mind, at least, in unison with ours;
Free from those meaner faults, that most conspire

To damp our love, if not to quench its fire.
Cold o'er the heart the slight expression steals,
That first some trait of character reveals;
A fault, perhaps, less prominent alone,
But causing painful friction with our own.
Long is the harsh, reluctant thought suppress,
We drive the cold suspicion from our breast;
But, when confirmed, our generous love condemn,
Turn off disgusted with the world and them,—
Resolve no more at Friendship's fane to serve,
And call her names she does not quite deserve.
But this is rash—Experience would confess
That friendship's very frailties chill us less
(Sincere and well-intentioned all the while)
Than the world's complaisant and polished smile.
With other chattels, nameless in my verse,
Friends must be held 'for better and for worse;'
And that alone true friendship we should call,
Which undertakes to love us *faults and all:*
And she who guides this humble line could prove,
There is, there *is*, such candid generous love;
And from the life, her faithful hand could paint
Glowing exceptions to her own complaint.

But that, of all discoveries life can boast,
Which disappoints us and surprises most,
Is, when the pleasing veil that serves to hide
Self from itself, by chance is drawn aside.
As when, perhaps, some kindred mind is shown,
In which we trace a portrait of our own:
Dissolved at once, as by the morning ray,
The mists of self-delusion pass away,
As that bright moment's unexpected glare

Shows us the best and worst of what we are.
—Or some chance word, in hasty converse dropt,
By which the wheel-work of the mind is stopt,
—That movement which in daily course goes round,
And leaves us just precisely where it found:
This casual word creates a wholesome pause;
The startled mind its quick conclusion draws,
Perceives the form it wears to other eyes,
The proper level where its talents rise,
And ere returning to a different theme,
Sinks a degree or two in self-esteem;
Then off it goes again, with little cost,
Save that the multiplying wheel is lost.

But if such sudden shock abate its force,
Experience aids it by a slower course:
Time, spite of fools and flattery, lets us see
Just what we are, not what we thought to be.
Midway in life we pause, compare with shame
Our present progress with our early aim;
Look back on years with purpose high begun,
In which the task intended was not done,
And see beyond us a declining sun;
—Fair opportunities forever fled;
The vigorous impulse dying, if not dead;
And we, in knowledge, habit, temper, state,
Nothing superior to the common rate.

How false is found, as on in life we go,
Our early estimate of bliss and wo!
—Some sparkling joy attracts us, that we fain
Would sell a precious birthright to obtain.

There all our hopes of happiness are placed;
Life looks without it like a joyless waste;
No good is prized, no comfort sought beside;
Prayers, tears implore, and will not be denied.
Heaven pitying hears the intemperate, rude appeal,
And suits its answer to our truest weal.
The self-sought idol, if at last bestowed,
Proves, what our wilfulness required—a goad;
Ne'er but as needful chastisement, is given
The wish thus forc'd, and torn, and storm'd from Heaven:
But if withheld, in pity, from our prayer,
We rave, awhile, of torment and despair,
Refuse each proffered comfort with disdain,
And slight the thousand blessings that remain;
Meantime, Heaven bears the grievous wrong, and waits
In patient pity till the storm abates;
Applies with gentlest hand the healing balm,
Or speaks the ruffled mind into a calm;
Deigning, perhaps, to show the mourner soon,
'T was special mercy that denied the boon.

Our blasted hopes, our aims and wishes crost,
Are worth the tears and agonies they cost,
When the poor mind, by fruitless efforts spent,
With food and raiment learns to be content.
Bounding with youthful hope, the restless mind
Leaves that divine monition far behind,
But tamed at length by suffering, comprehends
The tranquil happiness to which it tends;
Perceives the high-wrought bliss it aimed to share
Demands a richer soil, a purer air;
That 't is not fitted, and would strangely grace

The mean condition of our mortal race;
And all we need, in this terrestrial spot,
Is calm contentment with 'the common lot.'

Oh, who that takes a retrospective view
Of years, now fading in the distant blue,
The snares to which impetuous we had flown,
Restrained by God's resistless arm alone;
How, ever yielding to our own self-will,
We would refuse the good, and choose the ill,
He interposing still on our behalf,
Still safely guiding by His rod and staff;
But with subdued, submissive heart would cry,
'Choose *Thou* my portion, guide me with thine eye!
One sole condition would I dare suggest,—
That thou wouldst save me from mine own request!'

In many streams may trouble wind its course,
But to ourselves we still must trace its source;
And 't is a thing impossible, we find,
Go where we will, to leave *ourselves* behind.
Feeling that burden wearisome to bear,
We seek to shift the scene and change the air;
From homespun cares commence our sanguine flight,
And on some verdant, peaceful vale alight.
Sweet is the scene, and sweet the tranquil hour;
The harassed mind perceives its soothing power;
For that short moment novelty can please;
Imagines health and joy in every breeze;
That moment past—the quick returning mood
Spreads it own tinge on wood, and vale, and flood;
The pearly heaven is tinctured with our pain,
And casts its faint reflection on the main;

The hills' bare outline seems to represent
The very features of our discontent;
The rock's fantastic fragments range as though
Fresh shivered to the pattern of our wo.
In vain we argue with ourselves, and *prove*
The scene delightful, just the kind we love;
In vain we urge and strain the languid sense,
To wring a drop of happiness from thence:
Yet, charge not rocks and hills with thy complaint,
The scene is lovely, but the heart is faint;
Invite sweet peace and charity to flow,
And nature brightens to her purest glow.

When hope her seat to memory has resigned,
And our chief solace is to look behind,
Then shall we learn, perhaps too late, to know
That sin weighs heavier on the mind than wo.
Grief, genuine grief, that comes at God's command,
In which our own misconduct has no hand,
Though, for the present, not a joyous thing,
Yet, when it passes over, leaves no sting.
The pains we feared, the ills we dreaded most,
Departed—seem a weak and harmless host;
We suffered, wept, but now can smile serene,
And wonder that our anguish was so keen:
Or if some blow that struck the tenderest part,
Has left its deep impression and its smart;
Still years allay it, and at length diffuse
A pleasing sadness that we would not lose.
But when by conscience, memory's eye is cast,
Pained and reluctant, on the guilty past,
And sees life's path bestrewed on every side
With sins and follies, thick and multiplied,

Follies for which our shame arrives too late,
Sins that Heaven only can obliterate,
And what slight efforts had restrained their power,—
How bitter the remembrance to this hour!

—Once in a town remote in Britain's isle,
A female stranger lodged in humble style:
The village gossip, roused when first she came,
At last discovered little but her name;
And scandal, weary with its fruitless quest,
Conjectured and invented all the rest.
Her quiet habits, and abstracted cast,
Repelled inquiry, and it dropt at last.
Her years were waning, and her whole array
Bespoke neglect, indifference, and decay;
Yet no wild look betrayed a wandering brain,
—It was not 'crazy Kate,' nor 'crazy Jane;'
Nor high expression marked some sudden fall,
—A common care-worn person—that was all.

Year after year she wandered up and down,
Mid the dull outskirts of that little town:
She loved a lonely turn, but 't was her way
To put it off till towards the close of day;
And there, all winter long, she might be met
Taking her walk as soon as sun was set.
When the dark sky foretold a stormy night,
And all the parlor fires were blazing bright,
Just as their social parties came to meet,
They used to see her pacing down the street;
'T was said she used a wishful eye to cast
On such a lively circle as she passed,
As though the smiling group and cheerful blaze

Waked some remembrance of her early days;
But still her lonely wanderings would prefer,
For she was strange to them, and they to her.

Beyond the town some low damp meadows lay,
Through which a sluggish stream pursued its way;
Tall reeds in that slow silent water stood,
And curling vapors rested on its flood:
This walk she chose, and though it seemed so dull,
It pleased her much, because her heart was full;
And there, unheeded by the passing breeze,
She used to vent it in such words as these.

'There 's something suits the temper of my mind
In the deep howlings of this wintry wind:
How the sky lowers! all darkly overspread,
Save one horizon streak of awful red;
So lowers *my* sky, and that bright line appears
Like the last glimmer of departed years.
If those who loved me then, could see this sight,—
—Me, wandering here on such a cheerless night,
A poor, lone stranger in this friendless wild,
How they would mourn for their deserted child!
But they are gone, and now these storms may blow,
And I, unheeded, wander to and fro,
And not in all this peopled world find one
To screen and cherish me as they had done.
I thought the world was kinder, and would prove
Some compensation for my parents' love:
I thought of friends—that once united band,
With whom I used to journey hand in hand;
But some are gone whence traveller ne'er returns,
The rest are eager in their own concerns;

They might not spurn me, but I would not go
To tax them with the burden of my wo.
This rugged world affords, at last, no rest
Like the safe covert of a parent's breast.
Oh, they had pity for my slightest pain,
I never sought *their* sympathy in vain!
—My dear indulgent father, how he strove
To train and win me by his patient love;
Endured my froward temper, and displayed
A kind forbearance that was ill repaid:
To thwart my little pleasures ever loth,
They yielded much, he and my mother both.
I was a sickly one, and all her skill,
And all her pity came when I was ill:
I can remember how she was distrest,
And took more thought for me than all the rest;
And what a sweet relief it seemed to be
To lay my aching head upon her knee:
Then she would moan, and stroke my sickly cheek,
And I was better while I heard her speak.
Thus I was fostered, thus my early days
She would enliven in a thousand ways,
My slightest pleasure to her own prefer,—
Yet, I grew up, and was not kind to her.
I grew up selfish, full of thoughts and cares
For my own good, but unconcerned for theirs;
I had my tastes and pleasures, but despised
The homespun comforts that my parents prized;
Warm friendships cherished, but I felt above
The common claims of duteous, filial love:
I gave cold service, but the smile that cheers,
The softer tone that soothes declining years,
These I withheld—they felt it—and the dart

That wounded them, now rankles in my heart.
—They had their failings,—ah, dear parents! how
These few infirmities are vanished now!
Would that I now could bear them, now too late,
Sustain and soothe instead of aggravate!
Would they could hear those wailings!—but they died—
There, there they sweetly slumber, side by side!
And would not lift a hand, nor raise an eye,
To bid me cease this unavailing cry.'

'Twas thus, in those dull evenings, all alone,
She used, from time to time, to make her moan;
And long frequented she the meadow's side,
In that descending way:—at last she died.

Her loving wanderer, let the muse rehearse,
And gather up the fragments of her verse.
—It seems, to me, Experience does but show
What some and sorrowing witnessed long ago;
Besides the whole dispute twixt Heaven and Earth,
Proving, as promise to be nothing worth;
And the 'lil' times our hearts and wants, who spoke
Of a light burden and an easy yoke.
Could we but scroll Heaven's unerring pen,
We see, we, with all threescore years and ten.
—He says His ways are pleasant,—not alone
To some bright spirits bending round the throne,
But peaceful, peaceful, sweet to the powers
Of such poor sordid earthly souls as ours;
We doubt—and all Experience claims to do,
Is simply this—to prove the statement true.

EGOTISM.

Ye powers fantastic! goblin, sylph and fay,
Whose subtle forms no laws material sway;
Ethereal essences, that dart and glide
Wherever pleasure or caprice may guide;
Who leap with equal ease, if ye are bid,
A lady's thimble and a pyramid,
And scale, alike regardless of a fall,
The parlor fender and the Chinese wall;
Slip through a key-hole, 'neath the listed door,
Or from the smallest crevice in the floor;
Or steer your way (and man's devices mock)
Through the dark mazes of a patent lock;—
Of you I sing not—but my theme shall be,
Of things as quick and volatile as ye,
—Those busy, subtle pronouns, *I* and *Me*.
Unsought, and unexpected they appear;
No barriers heed they, and no laws revere;
But wind and penetrate, with dexterous force,
Through all the cracks and crannies of discourse.

Of those with whom *self* proves the darling theme,
Not all indulge it in a like extreme;
Some have the sense to cover it, no doubt;
Would they had sense enough to root it out!

We therefore bring, as first upon the list,
The loud, loquacious, vulgar egotist;
Whose *I's* and *Me's* are scattered in his talk,
Thick as the pebbles on a gravel walk.
Whate'er the topic be, through thick and thin
Himself is thrust, or squeezed, or sidled in.
Conceiving thus his own importance swells,
He makes himself a part of all he tells;
And still to this he winds the subject round:—
Suppose his friend is married, sick, or drowned,
He brought about the match, he lets you know;
Told him about Miss B. a year ago;
Or never shall forget, whate'er ensues,
How much he felt when first he heard the news.
A horseman, thrown, lay weltering in the mud;
He thought of something that would stop the blood.
A neighbor had a quarrel with his wife;
He never saw such doings in his life!
A fire broke out at midnight in the town;
He started up, threw on his flannel gown,
Seized an old hat full twice as large as his,
And said, *says he*, 'I wonder where it is!'
Was doubtful if 't were best to stay or go,
And trembled like a leaf, from top to toe.
In vain at times, some modest stander-by,
Catching a pause to make his brief reply,
Cries, 'dear!' or, 'only think!' or, 'so did I;'
For he, by no such obstacles deterred,
Runs on, must tell his tale, and *will* be heard.

Wo to themselves, and wo to small and great,
When two good egotists are *tete-a-tete!*
A battle this, though not of swords, but tongues,

And he the victor who has strongest lungs.
Too eager each in what himself recites,
To see how little interest it invites,
Each takes the attention his companion shows,
For pleasure in the story as it goes;
Though judging by himself, he might have known,
He is but waiting to begin his own,
Watching some gap in the opponent's speech
To force it in—like soldiers at a breach.

Few *talkers* can detain themselves to weigh
The true impression made by what they say;
And of all talkers, egotists are last
E'en to suspect that they may talk too fast.
But often, while pursuing their career,
Rejoiced that while they speak the rest must hear,
Some dry observer, whom they scarce perceive,
Sits smiling in his philosophic sleeve,
Impelled, (while others carelessly condemn)
To blush for human nature and for them.

But 't is not only with the loud and rude
That *self* betrays its nature unsubdued;
Polite attention and refined address
But ill conceal it, and can ne'er suppress:
One truth, despite of manner, stands confest—
They love themselves unspeakably the best.

Many monopolists of words have been
Unconscious quite of their besetting sin;
Of strong susceptibility possessed,
Enraptured oft, and oft as much distressed,
They deem themselves, nor others deem them less,

Affectionate and feeling to excess:
The charge of selfishness, or unconcern
In other's weal, with indignation spurn,
And think their failing and their weakest part,
Is having, as the phrase is—too much heart.
But tender hearts as well were hearts of stone,
If what they feel is for themselves alone.

Have you no knowledge of this species? then
Take fair *Matilda* for a specimen;
Compare the sketch with faces you have known,
And ere you quite discard it—with your own.
What! has *Matilda*, then, no heart to feel
Generous emotion for another's weal?
Oh yes, she has,—the doubt she would declare
Hard and unjust to *her*, beyond compare;
Her friends' and neighbors' interests to forget!
She were the last to bear that blame—but yet
Engrossed by cares and interests of her own,
In *fact*, she gladly lets her friends alone;
Too eager, and too busy to reflect,
What people may, and what they do expect.

Calm observation, and acute survey
Of others and ourselves, are swept away
By that strong, rude velocity of thought,
Which meets no proper barrier where it ought,
But rushes on, impetuous and unstemmed:—
Astonished, and abashed, and self-condemned,
Would stand *Matilda*, could she once be shown
Not other people's failings, but her own;
And see, how borne on that perpetual tide,
She thinks and talks of self, and none beside:

Then might she learn to check its rapid force,
Abate its swiftness, and divert its course,
Make it through other fields meandering go,
And drain, in time, the selfish channel low.

Matilda's friend, as few besides had done,
(A patient, quiet, unpretending one)
Sits cheerful and unwearied day by day,
To hear, as usual, what she has to say.
By long experience, now at length, she learns
To drop all reference to her own concerns;
Th' insipid 'dear!' or 'sure!' too well declares
Impatience in discussing those affairs;
And then, the eager tone and altered brow,
How much her own are dearer—so that now,
—Whether her heart be aching, or it swell
With some sweet hope 't would be a joy to tell—
She checks the inclination, to attend
To some new project of her eager friend:
—How she intends, as soon as winter 's o'er,
To make a passage to the nursery door,
Enlarge the parlor where she loves to sit,
And have the Turkey carpet made to fit;
Or, how she means next spring to go to town,
And then to have her aunt and uncle down.
Or if more intellectual in her mood,
How she employs her hours of solitude;
—Her plans, how much they fail, or how succeed;
What last she read, and what she means to read;
What time she rises, and what time retires,
And how her deeds fall short of her desires.
All this is very well, perhaps you cry;
True, if her friend might whisper, 'so do I.'

Whene'er from home *Matilda* has to go,
With the same theme her letters overflow;
Sheet after sheet in rapid course she sends,
Brimful and crossed, and written at both ends,
About her journey, visits, feelings, friends:
Still, still the same!—or if her friend had cast
Down in a modest postscript in her last,
Some line, which to transactions may refer
Of vital consequence perhaps to her,
Maltida in reply, just scrawls, you know
Along that slip on which the seal must go,
'I'm glad, or grieved, to hear of so and so.'

How can she pardon such unkind neglects?
Why 't is poor human nature, she reflects;
Judging with kindness, candor, and good sense,
Takes it from whence it comes, without offence:
And she, with meekness gifted to endure
The evil she laments, but cannot cure,
Too wise to censure or resent the ill,
Sees it, and smiles, as even friendship will;
Resolves to watch *herself* with double toil,
And root the selfish weeds from nature's soil.
—And so should we, for we are selfish all,
Without one real exception since the fall.
Good nature and good sense in some, 't is true,
Do much the vicious temper to subdue;
While some, unwittingly allow its growth,
Who yet might fair pretensions make to both.
Of all impostors he least wisdom shows,
Who can and does upon himself impose.
Self-knowledge of all knowledge is the best;

By most pretended, but by few possessed.
That true philosophy not understood,
The aim to do ourselves or others good,
Proves weak;—for they who to themselves are blind,
Never attain the knowledge of mankind.
But self-acquaintance is a certain guide;
That key unlocks ten thousand hearts beside;
There, in a glass, the common cast is shown;
—He knows the world who truly knows his own.

The tattered wretch, who scrapes his idle tunes
Through our dull streets on rainy afternoons;
The lawless nuisance of the king's highway,
Houseless and friendless, wander where he may;
Suspected, spurned, unbound by social ties,
With none to mourn or miss him when he dies;
Still, to himself, that vagrant man appears
The central object of revolving spheres,
Not less than he, who sweeps with regal robe
Half the circumference of the peopled globe.
All seem for *him* that eye or thought can view,
The ground he treads, and heaven's ethereal blue,
The sheltering hovel he has gained from far,
And the faint glimmer of the utmost star.
Nought he regards by art or nature made,
But as it serves his pleasure or his trade:
Mankind, should he define them, this the sense,
—Things bearing purses—purses yielding pence;
The ranging doors that meet his practised eye,
But places seem where he may knock and try;
Where'er he stands, creation's dearest spot;—
For what were all to him if *he* were not?

[illegible] I paused as he was passing by,
[illegible] to the notes of his harsh minstrelsy;
[illegible] marvelled that such low estate
[illegible] in him to his fate:
[illegible] my roving thoughts had flown,
[illegible] to my own;
[illegible] I saw
[illegible] and imperious law.
[illegible] of wo it bears,
[illegible] and cares,
[illegible] and ill.—
[illegible] still?
[illegible] bondage and be free!
[illegible] as others see!
[illegible] we pass,
[illegible] mighty mass!

[illegible] and stern eye,
[illegible] for a sunshine by,
[illegible] and seeking from above,
[illegible] self-love.—
[illegible] exalts the mind
[illegible] of mankind.
[illegible] its mean and rounded length,
[illegible] to grandeur and to strength:
[illegible] learns to power,
[illegible] learns to power:
[illegible] befalls.
Between the mind that soars and that which crawls.
That is a vulgar mind, which never learns
The just dimensions of its own concerns:
But sunk in petty interests, private cares,

Fancies vast import in its small affairs.
True, the philosopher himself is caught
Absorbed, at times, in low and selfish thought;
But here the difference lies, that he can smile
At that contracted temper all the while;
And thence his soul, with glad transition, springs
Tired and disgusted up to nobler things.

Poor human nature! whither should it flee,
Undone, infirm, and weak beyond degree,
But to the well of life? that healthful tide,
Whose waters, when by humble faith applied,
Raise up the impotent, restore the blind,
And cure the inveterate maladies of mind.
He knows, who fashioneth our hearts the same,
Every *minutia* of their inmost frame;
To which, in that blest volume he has writ,
The line and precept admirably fit:
They reach, not actions only, but the thought
That tends to folly,—not alone are brought
Against the act that does our neighbor wrong,
—They teach the egotist to hold his tongue.

How vainly may we follow and digest
What human wits and moralists attest;
E'en those who studied human nature most,
Shakspeare and Johnson, Locke and all the host;
And even pore in vain on that bright page
Which teaches and consoles from age to age;
Unless we come imploring help and cure,
Guilty and impotent, and blind and poor,
Asking for 'all things new,' by faith and prayer;

—Not with some little failing here and there,
Which, proving inconvenient where it stands,
We wish completely taken off our hands,—
But seek, (accounting all beside it loss)
A thorough renovation at the cross.
Then would the healing streams of mercy wind
Throughout the sickly mazes of the mind;
The weeds of selfishness would droop and die,
And plants of charity their place supply;
That fruitful stream, refreshing as it flows,
Would make the desert blossom as the rose.

POETRY AND REALITY.

THE worldly minded, cast in common mould,
With all his might pursuing fame or gold,
And towards that goal too vehemently hurled
To waste a thought about another world,
Has one advantage which yon lofty host,
His intellectual betters, may not boast:
Neither deceiving nor deceived, he knows
He and religion are inveterate foes;
He loves it not, and making no pretence,
He shows his honesty if not his sense.

But we have seen a high-flown, mental thing,
As fine and fragile as *libella's* wing,
And soul and intellect, the ethereal mind
Scarcely within its earthly house confined,
On Heaven oft casting an enraptured eye,
And paying compliments to the Most High;
And yet, though harsh the judgment seem to be,
As far from Heaven, as far from God, as he.
Yes, might the bold assertion be forgiven,
A *poet's* soul may miss the road to Heaven!

—'T is Sabbath morning, and at early hour
The poet seeks his own sequestered bower:
The shining landscape stretches full in view;

All Heaven is glowing with unclouded blue;
The hills lie basking in the sunny beams,
Enriched with sprinkled hamlets, woods, and streams:
And hark! from tower and steeple, here and there,
The cheerful chime bespeaks the hour of prayer.
The poet's inmost soul responsive swells
To every change of those religious bells;
His fine eye ranging o'er the spacious scene,
With ecstasy unutterably keen;
His mind exalted, melted, soothed, and free
From earthly tumult, all tranquillity;—
If this is not devotion what can be?

But, gentle poet, wherefore not repair
To yonder temple? God is worshipped there.
Nay, wherefore should he?—wherefore not address
The God of nature in that green recess,
Surrounded by His works, and not confined
To rites adapted to the vulgar mind?
There he can sit, and thence his soul may rise,
Caught up in contemplation to the skies,
And worship nature's God on reason's plan:
—It is delusion, self-applauding man!
The God of nature is the God of grace;
The contrite spirit is his dwelling-place;
And thy proud offering, made by reason's light,
Is all abomination in His sight.

Let him distinguish (if he can indeed)
Wherein *his* differs from the deist's creed:—
Oh, he approves the Bible, thinks it true,
(No matter if he ever read it through)
Admits the evidence that some reject,

For the Messiah professes great respect,
And owns the sacred poets often climb
Up to the standard of the true sublime.
Is this then all? is this the utmost reach
Of what man learns when God descends to teach?
And is this all—and were such wonders wrought,
And tongues, and signs, and miracles, for nought?
If this be all, his reason's utmost scope,
Where rests his faith, his practice, and his hope?
'Deny thyself!'—that precept, binding still
As when first issued, how does he fulfil?
Where lies the cross that he would daily bear?
Where that reproach the Saviour's flock must share?
What is the dear indulgence he denies?
Which of his virtues is a sacrifice?
Is it his aim to keep the world at bay—
Where then the faith that overcomes its sway?
How has he learned the easy yoke to take,
And count all things but loss for Jesus' sake?

Nay, this is all irrational, absurd;—
And yet, it is the Bible, word for word:
Well, but it grates upon his classic ear;—
'He that hath ears to hear it, let him hear.'
Ne'er could he take, his gentle lips within,
So unpoetical a word as *sin*;
He knows it not, and never felt its chains,
While unmolested in his heart it reigns;
His self complacence is its own reward,—
He wants not such a Saviour as the Lord.

Pride and indulgence, fallen nature's fruit,
Religion strikes at, to the very root;

And wonder they much are misinformed rules,
Thus never wonders on the Gospel sermon,
And he that [illegible] man and wonder,
To sink the [illegible] of his mind,
Bible-doctrine would [illegible] change,
Taken [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] strange,
The man, [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible],
In still a slave to manhood's [illegible],
His [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible],
To God [illegible], [illegible], [illegible]:
His Heaven, the same Elysian [illegible] as [illegible],
—Where [illegible] a wound as [illegible], without its [illegible];
Where [illegible] of friends and lovers, [illegible] and [illegible],
Walk as [illegible] known, with nothing else to [illegible],
He, in [illegible] with the [illegible] [illegible],
'Knows not the Scripture nor the power of God;'
Nor even [illegible] to Zion's heavenly [illegible],
Where many [illegible] for believers [illegible]:
Where [illegible] [illegible] around their Saviour [illegible];
And [illegible] their crowns repeating at His feet:
And where, wherever [illegible] their powers employ,
His [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] of their joy.
—This is the [illegible] to which the [illegible] aspires,
This is that 'better country' he desires:
And as while [illegible] [illegible], and [illegible] doubt,
The poor wayfaring man shall find it out.

Indulgence slumbers in the arms of pride,
This sin with that in closest bonds allied;
And he is still an epicure in kind,
Who lives on pleasure, though it be refined.
'T is true, the love of nature—genuine taste,
Has ever minds of finest texture graced,

And they, who draw no soft emotion thence,
Possess but half a soul, and want a sense:
Yes, and the *Christian* poet feels its force
With double zest, and tastes it at its source.
—But mark our fond enthusiast where he strays;
In pensive musings glide his tranquil days;
In nature's beauties, not content to find
That bliss subordinate which God designed,
—With soothing influence, mid corroding cares,
To cheer the hour of leisure duty spares,—
It is his very end, he asks no more,
To view, enjoy, invoke it, and adore:
And deems his aim and happiness well placed,
Confounding picturesque, with moral taste.

The village church, in reverend trees arrayed,
His favorite haunt—he loves that holy shade;
And there he muses many an eve away,
Though not with others, on the Sabbath day.
Nor cares he how they spend the sacred hour,
But—how much ivy grows upon the tower.
Yes, the deluded poet can believe
The soothing influence of a summer's eve,—
That sacred spot—the train of pensive thought,
By osiered grave and sculptured marble brought,
The twilight gloom, the stillness of the hour,
Poetic musings on a churchyard flower,
The moonshine, solitude, and all the rest,
Will raise devotion's flame within his breast:
And while susceptive of the magic spell,
Of sacred music, and the Sabbath bell,
And each emotion nature's form inspires,
He fancies this is all that God requires.

Indeed, the Gospel would have been his scoff,
If man's devices had not set it off:
For that which turns poor noncon.formists sick,
Touches poetic feeling to the quick:
—The gothic edifice, the vaulted dome,
The toys bequeathed us by our cousin Rome,
The pompous festival, the splendid rite,
The mellow window's soft and soothing light,
The painted altar, and the white-robed priest,
(Those gilded keepsakes from the dying beast)
The silken cassock, and the sable vest,
Please him so well that he endures the rest.
Like him, how many! (could we make the search)
Who while they hate the gospel, love 'the church.'

That Gospel, preached by Jesus to the poor,
Simple, sublime, and spiritual, and pure,
Is not constructed, and was ne'er designed,
To please the morbid, proud, romantic mind:
'T is not in flowers, or fields, or fancy found;
Nor on Arcadian, nor on *holy ground;*
'T is not in poetry, 't is not in sound;
Not even where those infant lips respire
A heaven of music from the fretted quire,
Chanting the prayer or praise in highest key.
—*Te deum*, or *Non nobis Domine.*

—Our poet seeks retirement, and he goes
Not from the world alone, but from its woes:
'T is true he weeps for crime—at least his muse;
And sighs for sorrows that he never views;
Indulges languid wishes that mankind
Were all poetical, and all refined;

Forms lofty schemes the flood of vice to stem,
(But preaching Jesus is not one of them;)
And thus in waking dreams, from day to day,
He wears his tranquil, harmless life away.
But true benevolence is on the wing;
'T is not content to look sublime and sing
It rises energetic, to perform
The hardest task, or face the rudest storm.

—Crossing the poet's sacred haunt, behold,
One formed in other, and in ruder mould.
Rapid his pace—and see, he checks it not,
To gaze or muse on that sequestered spot:
Perchance his eye, untutored, only sees
In that fine shade, *St. Something's* church and trees;
All lost on him its magic, all in vain
The bright reflection on the gothic pane;
Or, should he feel the charm, he will not stay,
But mounts the stile, and plods his onward way.
'I wonder, rustic stranger, who thou art!'
—I'll tell thee, gentle bard, with all my heart—
A poor Itinerant—start not at the sound!
To yonder licensed barn his course is bound;
To christened heathens, upon Christian ground,
To preach—or if you will, to rant and roar
That Gospel news they never heard before.
Two distant hamlets this same day have heard
His warning voice, and now he seeks the third.
No mitred chariot bears him rounds his See,
Despised and unattended, journeys he;
And want and weariness, from day to day,
Have sown the seeds of premature decay;
There is a flush of hectic on his cheeks,

There is a deadly gasping when he speaks.
—How many a rich one, less diseased than he,
Has all that love can do, or doctor's fee;
Nursed up and cherished with the fondest care,
Screened from the slightest blast of evening air;
At noon, well muffled in his ermined gown,
Takes his short airing with the glasses down;
Each novel dainty that his taste may suit,—
The quivering jelly, or the costly fruit,
Love racks invention daily to present,
And if he do but taste it, is content.
But not so he, nor such is his reward,
Who takes his cross and follows Christ the Lord.
—A brief coarse meal, at some unseemly board,
Snatched as the hasty intervals afford;
Fresh from the crowded preaching-house, to meet
The keen night vapor, or the driving sleet;
And then the low damp bed, and yet the best
The homely hamlet yields its weary guest;
And more than all, and worse than all to bear,
Trial of cruel mockings everywhere,—
That persecution, which is suffered still
By those who love their Lord and do his will;
—Not such, indeed, as his forefathers saw,
(Thanks to the sheltering arm of *civil* law)
But scorn, contempt, and scandal, and disgrace,
Which hunt His followers still, from place to place;
—Such are the ills that wear his sickly frame
But still he counts it joy to suffer shame.

Yes, and he reaps the fruit of all his toil;
He sows the seed, and God has blessed the soil;
He sees the wicked man forsake his ways;

The scoffing tongue has learned to perfect praise;
The drunken quits his revelry and strife,
And meekly listens to the word of life;
The noisy village, wanton and profane,
Grows neat and decent, peace and order reign:
At length, wide districts hail the Gospel rays,
And the once savage *miner* kneels and prays;
Through his dark caverns shines the heavenly light,
And prejudice grows silent at the sight.

Now, let the *light of nature*-boasting man,
'Do so with his enchantments,' if he can!—
Nay, let him slumber in luxurious ease,
Beneath the umbrage of his idol trees,
Pluck a wild daisy, moralize on that,
And drop a tear for an expiring gnat,
Watch the light clouds o'er distant hills that pass,
Or write a sonnet to a blade of grass.

AIMS AT HAPPINESS.

How oft has sounded whip and wheel,
How oft is buckled spur to heel,
How many a steed in short relay
Stands harnessed on the king's highway,
How many a pleasure-freighted sail
Has danced before the summer gale,
How oft along the dusty road
The long machine has borne its load,
How many a step!—and all to find
What has no place but in the mind,
(Unbound to ocean, earth, or air);
And he who does not find it there,
For what he seeks would vainly look,
Though steersman made to *Captain Cook.*

Panting for pleasure never yet possessed,
Since restless man first sought an earthly rest,
Felix projected many a fair essay,
To make life fritter pleasantly away;
And 't was his firm intent to range and roam
For what, if found at all, is found at home.

But still restrained beneath a tutor's care,
No wonder that he could not find it there:
And then, his father's ways, and mother's whim,
Were most intolerable *bores* to him.
But these are grievances which soon give way,
Fathers and mothers die—and so did they.
Now, with an income of sufficient size
To gratify his wishes as they rise,
He wants for nothing that can bliss confer,
Freedom nor gold;—'Well, are you happy, sir?'
Hear him with peevish restlessness reply,
—'Not yet, sir, but I shall be by and by.
—I can't endure this old paternal spot,
Nor ever could, in fact,—I tell you what!
I mean to sell the place and build a cot.'

How happy they, whom poverty denies
To execute the projects they devise!
But *Felix*, well supplied with evil's root,
Endured the penance while he plucked the fruit.
—He sold his house, relenting all the while,
And built his cottage, quite in cottage style;
Each rural ornament was quick bespoke;
And down they came, all fresh from London smoke.
The tasty trellis o'er the front is seen,
With rose and woodbine woven in between:
Within, the well-paid artist lays it out,
To look ten times more rural than without:
The silver paper, or the stuccoed wall,
Are here discarded—'t is enchantment, all—
Arcadian landscapes, 'neath Italian skies
Profusely glow, and 'Alps o'er Alps arise;'
In bright relief Corinthian columns stare,

[illegible] with leaves that grow by magic there:
And there you see, all sere and sung at noon,
And gone at sunset and Tomorrow, Dawn and Flower.

Ah, have we seen! poor Felix, sad and pensive,
In some [illegible] paper room and pensive lounge,
—It did at first, when all was fresh and new,
While become wonderers, for a day or two:
But always, always, that invasive view:
Yes, there they are: behold it when we will,
The towering mountains, always standing still:
The mountains crowning, just the same as ever:
And there the rising sun, but rises never:
Oh, we would give the gaudy magnings all,
For a brown common or a wooded wall!

Felix, at length, while groaning with ennui,
All in a breath, enthusiast son of the sea,
—Ah! that was it:—cloaked up with mile and mass,
Who could ever, he mused for a breeze.
So, off he sped forthwith, and traveling past,
Like a king's messenger, he seeks the coast.
From you seen hill he views with ardent gaze
The first blue line of horizontal sea:
Again it's lost for many a weary mile,
He thirsting to behold it all the while:
At length bare hills bespeak his near advance;
—Now straight before him rolls the wide expanse;
The road, with sudden turn and steep descent,
Reveals it to him to his heart's content;
But so abrupt and near, it seems as though
Himself, and chaise, and all, to sea must go.
—And now the crowded lodgings searching through,

For one to suit him, with a fine sea-view,
He 's forced, at last, though not for want of cash,
To take a shabby room and single sash;
Where, 'twixt two sloping roofs, there just may be
A slice triangular of rolling sea;
A narrow stint; and there he sits alone,
Refreshed with zephyrs from the torrid zone,
And watching all the morning, scarce can fail
To spy a passing oar or distant sail:
'How pleasant,' then, in languid tone, he 'll cry,
'To sit and see the boats and ships go by!'

Now 't is highwater, and with hundreds more,
He goes to catch a breeze along the shore;
Or pace the crowded terrace, where one sees
Fashion and folly, beauty and disease.
—The waning belle, come down to sport her face,
And try her fortune at a watering place;
The alderman, wheeled out in gouty chair;
The love-sick girl, sent down for change of air;
The sickly child, to bathe his crippled knee;
The hopeless hectic, come to try the sea;
The queer-faced artist, standing like a post,
To watch th' effect of sun-set on the coast:
Then one, perchance, who differs from the rest,
As much as—O, too much to be expressed—
He, nature's genuine lover, casts his eye,
Lit up with intellect, on sea and sky,
Drinks in the scene, and feels his bosom swell
With what he could not, what he would not tell;
(They would have star'd and sneer'd, or tho't him mad,
Or wondered at his oddness, if he had.)
He goes unnoticed by the motley race;
But not so they—he has an eye to trace

The lines of character in every face.
His, not the broad, unmeaning, vacant stare;
He does but turn to study nature there:—
The eye of suffering ventures not to meet,
Detects the latent smirk of self-conceit,
The even arch with hopeless dulness fraught,
The wand'ring eye, bespeaking distant thought,
The languid smile, that strives to smooth in vain
Features contracted by incessant pain:
Nor his, the cold, severe, sarcastic quest;
A pure philanthropy has warmed his breast;
And many a generous sigh from thence will steal,
For woes and vices that he cannot heal.

Meanwhile the others, though like him possessed
Of eye, and ear, and heart, and all the rest,
(At least, if some might question it, I know
Any anatomist would tell you so)
Think not, nor see, nor hear, nor feel like this,
But find in common objects common bliss.
To them the sea is water; and the sky
Is full of stars, they think, and blue and high:
'Delightful, pleasant, charming,' all agree,
'That comes of course,—one must admire the sea;
And then they gape and turn, or stop to chat
With Mrs. *This*, and then with Mr. *That*.

—And such was *Will*—and he wondered still,
Since he was neither ugly, old, nor ill,
Why town nor country, villa, land, nor sea,
Made him as happy as he wished to be.
Instead of wondering, had he been inclined
To sit and speculate about his mind;
Observe its inward work and native bent,

And trace the hidden springs of discontent;
Mark its high destiny, and learn from thence,
Not to insult it with the joys of sense,
—Then were he nearer to the envied goal,
Than e'er before, with body *versus* soul:
The very mental effort were a feast,
Itself, *akin* to happiness at least.

But this he knew not, and with fruitless aim,
Soon posted back no wiser than he came.
The lessons taught at Disappointment's knee,
Some dunces cannot learn, nor more could he.
Where next he sped to find the mystic spell,
And how he failed, the time would fail to tell;
So, close his story with a little fable,
Hoping the muse will drop it on his table.

A FABLE.

One day a sage knocked at a chemist's door,
Bringing a curious compound to explore.—
'Behold,' said he, as from his vest he drew it,
'This little treasure in a golden cruet:
A life, a long one, for my locks are gray,
In ceaseless toil has slowly passed away,
To gain that treasure; now my search must stop,
And see, I have but saved this little drop!
To know the worth and nature of the prize,
I bring it here for you to analyze.
The best philosopher could never quite
Its origin and essence bring to light;

But you, they say, by some mysterious arts,
Reduce all substances to simple parts:
—Your nomenclature differs, sir, from his,
We call it *happiness*,—and here it is.'

And now the learned chemist strove to guess
With what this curious stuff would coalesce:
He sprinkled first a layer of golden dust,
But this recoiled, and seemed to gender rust;
Then sundry essences in turn applies;
Distilled from all that golden dust supplies;
—Castles and villas, titles, vassals, land,
Coaches and curricles, and fours-in-hand;
Silks, jewels, equipages, parties, plays,
Madeira, venison, turtle-soup, and praise;
But strove in vain a union to produce
With one of these, and that small drop of juice:
As though impatient of the vain essay,
It did but effervesce and fume away.

With more success the chemist next imparts
Extracts from the *belles lettres* and the arts.
No sooner do they reach it, than he sees
It has some small affinity with these;
But yet, his nicest skill could not prevent
A large residuum of discontent.

Two curious phials next he brings to view,
The first bright green, the next of roseate hue;
And first unstopped them with the greatest care,
For when exposed to atmospheric air
They frequently evaporate, and vain
All efforts then to bottle them again.
Essence of friendship from the former flows

And though the drop it did not decompose,
The chemist said, it rather seemed to fix,
Or float upon the surface, than to mix.

Long from the next a trembling drop suspends,
—That roseate phial—and at last descends;
'Ah,' cried the chemist, with reviving glee,
'A perfect coalition here I see!
Distilled from love this gentle fluid came;—
And then he told the sage its Latin name;
Then looked again, to watch the process on,
But found, alas! the sage's prize was gone!
The sudden contact caused a heat extreme
It could not brook, so passed away in steam.
Alone the essence pale and watery lay;—
The sage demands his treasure with dismay;
They search the cruet, and behold it hid,
At last, in pearly drops upon the lid.

Though foiled, the patient chemist will not stop,
But aiming still to decompose the drop,
A potent acid cautiously applies,
And straight it separates in wondrous wise.
Now, first appears at bottom of the phial
A large precipitate of self-denial;
Of patience, next, a copious layer is laid;
Of conscience, twenty scruples nicely weighed;
Humility and charity, they find
With half a dram of self-esteem combined;
Prudence, attached to energy of soul,
And moderation to correct the whole;
Feeling and taste in airy gas unite,
And knowledge rises in a flame of light.

RECREATION.

—We took our work, and went, you see,
To take an early cup of tea.
We did so now and then, to pay
The friendly debt, and so did they.
Not that our friendship burnt so bright
That all the world could see the light;
'T was of the ordinary *genus*,
And little love was lost between us:
We loved, I think, about as true
As such near neighbors mostly do.

At first, we all were somewhat dry;—
Mamma felt cold, and so did I:
Indeed, that room, sit where you will,
Has draught enough to turn a mill.
'I hope you 're warm,' says Mrs. G.
'O, quite so,' says mamma, *says she;*
'I 'll take my shawl off by and by.'—
'This room is always warm,' *says I.*

At last the tea came up, and so,
With that, our tongues began to go.
Now, in that house you 're sure of knowing
The smallest scrap of news that 's going;

We find it *there* the wisest way
To take some care of what we say.

—Says she, 'there's dreadful doings still
In that affair about the *will;*
For now the folks in Brewer's Street
Don't speak to *James's*, when they meet.
Poor Mrs. *Sam* sits all alone,
And frets herself to skin and bone.
For months she managed, she declares,
All the old gentleman's affairs;
And always let him have his way,
And never left him night nor day;
Waited and watched his every look,
And gave him every drop he took.
Dear Mrs. *Sam*, it was too bad!
He might have left her all he had.'

'Pray ma'am,' says I, 'has poor Miss A.
Been left as *handsome* as they say?'
'My dear,' says she, ''t is no such thing,
She'd nothing but a mourning ring.
But is it not *uncommon* mean,
To wear that rusty bombazeen!'
'She had,' says I, 'the very same,
Three years ago, for—what's his name?'—
'The Duke of *Brunswick*,—very true,
And has not bought a thread of new,
I'm positive,' said Mrs. G.—
So then we laughed, and drank our tea.

'So,' says mamma, 'I find it's true
What Captain P. intends to do;

To hire that house, or else to buy—'
'Close to the tan-yard, ma'am,' says I;
'Upon my word it's very strange,
I wish they may n't repent the change!'
'My dear,' says she, ''t is very well
You know, if *they* can bear the smell.'

'Miss F.' says I, 'is said to be
A sweet young woman, Mrs. G.'
'O, excellent! I hear,' she cried;
'O, truly so!' mamma replied.
'How old should you suppose her, pray?
She's older than she looks, they say.'
'Really,' says I, 'she seems to me
Not more than twenty-two or three.'
'Oh, then you're wrong,' says Mrs. G.
'Their upper servant told our *Jane*,
She'll not see twenty-nine again.'
'Indeed, so old! I wonder why
She does not marry, then,' says I;
'So many thousands to bestow,
And such a beauty, too, you know.'
'A beauty! O, my dear Miss B.
You must be joking, now,' says she;
'Her *figure's* rather pretty,'———'Ah!
That's what *I* say,' replied mamma.

'Miss F.' says I, 'I've understood,
Spends all her time in doing good:
The people say her coming down
Is quite a blessing to the town.'
At that our hostess fetched a sigh,
And shook her head; and so, says I,

'It 's very kind of her, I 'm sure,
To be so generous to the poor.'
'No doubt,' says she, ''t is very true;
Perhaps there may be *reasons* too:—
You know some people like to pass
For *patrons* with the lower class.'

And here I break my story's thread,
Just to remark, that what she said,
Although I took the other part,
Went like a cordial to my heart.

Some inuendos more had passed,
Till out the scandal came at last.
'Come then, I 'll tell you something more,'
Says she,—'Eliza, shut the door.—
I would not trust a creature here,
For all the world, but you, my dear.
Perhaps it 's false—I wish it may,
—But let it go no further, pray!'
'O,' says mamma, 'You need not fear,
We never mention what we hear.'
'Indeed we shall not, Mrs. G.'
Says I, again, impatiently:
And so, we drew our chairs the nearer,
And whispering, lest the child should hear her,
She told a tale, at least too *long*,
To be repeated in a song;
We, panting every breath between,
With curiosity and spleen.
And how we did enjoy the sport!
And echo every faint report,

And answer every candid doubt,
And turn her motives inside out,
And each reputed virtue hide,
Till we were fully satisfied!

—Thus having brought it to a close,
In great good humor, we arose.
Indeed, 't was more than time to go,
Our boy had been an hour below.
So, warmly pressing Mrs. G.
To fix a day to come to tea,
We muffled up in cloak and plaid,
And trotted home behind the lad.

THE SQUIRE'S PEW.

A SLANTING ray of evening light
  Shoots through the yellow pane;
It makes the faded crimson bright,
  And gilds the fringe again:
The window's gothic frame-work falls
In oblique shadow on the walls.

And since those trappings first were new
  How many a cloudless day,
To rob the velvet of its hue,
  Has come and passed away!
How many a setting sun hath made
That curious lattice-work of shade!

Crumbled beneath the hillock green
  The cunning hand must be,
That carved this fretted door, I ween,
  Acorn, and *fleur-de-lis*;
And now the worm hath done her part
In mimicking the chisel's art.

—In days of yore (as now we call)
  When the first *James* was king,
The courtly knight from yonder hall
  Hither his train did bring;

All seated round in order due,
With broider'd suit and buckled shoe.

On damask cushions, set in fringe,
  All reverently they knelt:
Prayer-books, with brazen hasp and hinge,
  In ancient English spelt,
Each holding in a lily hand,
Responsive at the priest's command.

—Now, streaming down the vaulted aisle,
  The sunbeam, long and lone,
Illumes the characters awhile
  Of their inscription stone;
And there, in marble hard and cold,
The knight and all his train behold.

Outstretched together, are expressed
  He and my lady fair;
With hands uplifted on the breast,
  In attitude of prayer;
Long visaged, clad in armor, he,—
With ruffled arm and bodice, she.

Set forth in order ere they died,
  The numerous offspring bend;
Devoutly kneeling side by side,
  As though they did intend
For past omissions to atone,
By saying endless prayers in stone.

Those mellow days are past and dim,
  But generations new,

In regular descent from him,
  Have filled the stately pew;
And in the same succession go,
To occupy the vault below.

And now, the polished, modern squire,
  And his gay train appear,
Who duly to the hall retire,
  A season, every year,—
And fill the seats with belle and beau,
As 't was so many years ago.

Perchance, all thoughtless as they tread
  The hollow sounding floor,
Of that dark house of kindred dead,
  Which shall, as heretofore,
In turn, receive, to silent rest,
Another, and another guest,—

The feathered hearse and sable train,
  In all its wonted state,
Shall wind along the village lane,
  And stand before the gate;
—Brought many a distant county through,
To join the final rendezvous.

And when the race is swept away,
  All to their dusty beds,
Still shall the mellow evening ray
  Shine gaily o'er their heads;
While other faces, fresh and new,
Shall occupy the squire's pew.

ACCOMPLISHMENT.

How is it that masters, and science, and art,
One spark of intelligence fail to impart,
Unless in that chemical union combined,
Of which the result, in one word, is a mind?

A youth may have studied, and travelled abroad,
May sing like *Apollo*, and paint like a *Claude*,
And speak all the languages under the pole,
And have every gift in the world, but a soul.

That drapery wrought by the leisurely fair,
Called *patchwork*, may well to such genius compare;
Wherein every tint of the rainbow appears,
And stars to adorn it are forced from their spheres.

There glows a bright pattern (a sprig or a spot)
'Twixt clusters of roses full-blown and red hot;
Here magnified tulips divided in three,
Alternately shaded with sections of tree.

But when all is finished, this labor of years,
A mass unharmonious, unmeaning appears;
'T is showy, but void of intelligent grace;
It is not a landscape, it is not a face.

'T is thus Education (so called in our schools)
With costly materials, and capital tools,
Sits down to her work, if you duly reward her,
And sends it home finished according to order.

See French and Italian spread out on her lap;
Then Dancing springs up, and skips into a gap;
Next Drawing and all its varieties come,
Sewed down in their place by her finger and thumb.

And then, for completing her fanciful robes,
Geography, Music, the use of the Globes,
&c. &c. which, match as they will,
Are sewn into shape, and set down in the bill.

Thus Science distorted, and torn into bits,
Art tortured, and frightened half out of her wits,
In portions and patches, some light and some shady,
Are stiched up together, and make a young lady.

A TOWN.

A busy town, mid Britain's isle,
  Behold in fancy's eye;
With tower, and spire, and civic pile,
  Beneath a summer sky;

And orchard, garden, field, and park,
  And grove, and sunny wall;
And ranging buildings, light and dark,
  As evening shadows fall.

Then listen to the ceaseless din
  Of hammer, saw, and crane;
And traffic passing out and in,
  From alley, street, and lane:

The sound, without a pause between,
  Of foot, and wheel, and hoof;
The manufacture's loud machine
  From yonder lengthened roof:

And children at their evening sports,
  Parading to and fro;
Assembled in the quiet courts
  Of yonder cottage row.

Gay streets display their shining wares
  To every roving eye,
As, eager in their own affairs,
  The busy tribes go by.

And ah! what varied forms of wo,
  What hope and fear are found;
What passions rise, what scandals grow,
  Within this narrow bound!

To pass the peaceful dwellings by,
  No stranger eye might guess
Those scenes of joy and agony,
  Of discord and distress.

Pain writhes within those stately walls;
  Here pallid want hath been;
That casement, where the curtain falls,
  Shows death has entered in.

The dwelling, ranging next to this,
  A youthful group displays;
Elate they seem with present bliss,
  And hope of distant days.

There, at her chamber-window high,
  A lonely maiden sits;
Its casement fronts the western sky,
  And balmy air admits:

And while her thoughts have wandered far
  From all she hears and sees,

She gazes on the evening star
  That twinkles through the trees.

Is it to watch the setting sun
  She does that seat prefer?—
Alas! the maiden thinks of one
  Who never thinks of her.

But lively is the street below,
  And ceaseless is the hum,
As some intent on pleasure go,
  On schemes of profit some.

Now widening seems the stream to be,
  As evening stretches o'er;
Plebeian tribes, from toil set free,
  Pour forth from every door.

A school, arranged in order due,
  (Before the sun goes down)
Lady and lady, two and two,
  Comes winding through the town.

And what drives up to yonder door
  The gaping crowd among?
A wedding train of chaises four,
  And all the bells are rung.

The laden wagon tinkles by,
  The post is going out,
The lights are lit, the coaches ply
  To tavern, ball, and rout.

Thus closed that merry summer's day;
  And would you ask me how
You might the busy scene survey,
  And see those faces now?—

Then hither turn—yon waving grass
  And mould'ring stones will show;
For these transactions came to pass
  A hundred years ago.

A PAIR.

THERE was a youth—but wo is me ·
I quite forgot his name, and he
Without some label round his neck,
Is like one pea among a peck.
Go search the country up and down,
Port, city, village, parish, town,
And, saving just the face and name,
You shall behold the very same
Wherever pleasure's train resorts,
From the Land's End to *Johnny Groats';*
And thousands such have swelled the herd,
From *William*, down to *George* the Third.

To life he started—thanks to fate,
In contact with a good estate:
Provided thus, and quite at ease,
He takes for granted all he sees;
Ne'er sends a thought, nor lifts an eye,
To ask what am I? where? and why?—
All that is no affair of his,
Somehow he came—and there he is!
Without such philosophic stuff,
Alive and well, and that 's enough.

Thoughts! why, if all that crawl like trains
Of caterpillars through his brains,

With every syllable let fall,
Bon mot, and compliment, and all,
Were melted down in furnace fire,
I doubt if shred of golden wire,
To make, amongst it all would linger,
A ring for *Tom Thumb's* little finger.
Yet, think not that he comes below
The modern, average ratio—
The current coin of fashion's mint—
The common, ball-room-going stint.
Of trifling cost his stock in trade is,
Whose business is to please the ladies;
Or who to honors may aspire
Of a town beau or country squire.
The cant of fashion and of vice
To learn, slight effort will suffice;
And he was furnished with that knowledge,
Even *before* he went to college.
And thus, without the toil of thought,
Favor and flattery may be bought.
No need to win the laurel, now,
For lady's smile or vassal's bow;
To lie exposed in patriot camp,
Or study by the midnight lamp.

Nature and art might vainly strive
To keep his intellect alive.
—'T would not have forced an exclamation
Worthy a note of admiration,
If he had been on Gibeon's hill,
And seen the sun and moon stand still.
What prodigy was ever known
To raise the pitch of fashion's tone!

Or mass it yield, by any chance,
That summer air of *mediocrance*,
Which after all, however smooth,
Is apathy, and want of truth.

The cringer every summer rill,
St. Giles or *Jamais*—which you will;
Spruce drapers in their mannered simper
Rank with right reasonable hope:
No real distinction marks the kinds—
The *rose* numerous on these minds.
But *mass* cannot rank that cannot yield
To obsolete arms and crested shield:
Above the trees and remain it stands
Of diamond stars from royal hands:
Nor wants the nod of country state,
To bid it be, or not be great.
The regions where it wings its way
Are set with brighter stars than they:
With calm countenance it thence looks down
On fortune's favor or its frown:
Looks down on those who vainly try,
By strange inversion of the eye,
From that poor mole-hill where they sit,
To cast a downward look on it:
As soon, from his pear-tree height,
Looks *down* upon the eagle's flight.

Before our youth had learned his letters,
They taught him to despise his betters:
And if some things have been forgot,
That lesson certainly has not.
The haunts his genius chiefly guesses,

Are tables, stables, taverns, races;—
The things of which he most afraid is,
Are tradesman's bills, and learned ladies:
He deems the first a grievous bore,
But loathes the latter even more
Than solitude or rainy weather,
Unless they happen both together.

Soft his existence rolls away,
To-morrow plenteous as to-day:
He lives, enjoys, and lives anew,—
And when he dies,—what shall we do!

Down a close street, whose darksome shops display
Old clothes and iron on both sides the way;
Loathsome and wretched, whence the eye in pain,
Averted turns, nor seeks to view again;
Where lowest dregs of human nature dwell,
More loathsome than the rags and rust they sell,—
A pale mechanic rents an attic floor;
By many a shattered stair you gain the door:
'T is one poor room, whose blackened walls are hung
With dust that settled there when he was young.
The rusty grate two massy bricks displays,
To fill the sides and make a frugal blaze.
The door unhinged, the window patched and broke,
The panes obscured by half a century's smoke:
There stands the bench at which his life is spent,
Worn, groov'd, and bored, and worm-devour'd, and bent,
Where daily, undisturbed by foes or friends,
In one unvaried attitude he bends.
His tools, long practised, seem to understand

Scarce less their functions, than his own right hand.
With these he drives his craft with patient skill;
Year after year would find him at it still:
The noisy world around is changing all,
War follows peace, and kingdoms rise and fall;
France rages now, and Spain, and now the Turk;
Now victory sounds;—but there he sits at work!
A man might see him so, then bid adieu!—
Make a long voyage to China or Peru;
There traffic, settle, build; at length might come,
Altered, and old, and weatherbeaten home,
And find him on the same square foot of floor
On which he left him twenty years before.
—The very attitude, and bench, and stool,
The same quick movement of his cunning tool;
The measured distance 'twixt his knees and chin,
As though he had but stepp'd just out and in.

Such is his fate—and yet you might descry
A latent spark of meaning in his eye.
—That crowded shelf, beside his bench, contains
One old, worn, volume that employs his brains:
With algebraic lore its page is spread,
Where *a* and *b* contend with *x* and *z*:
Sold by some *student* from an Oxford hall,
Bought by the pound upon a broker's stall.
Oh, this is his sole delight to pore,
Early and late, when working time is o'er:
But oft he stops, bewildered and perplex'd,
At some hard problem in the learned text;
Passing his hand upon his puzzled brain,
At what the dullest school-boy could explain.

From needful sleep the precious hour he saves,
To give his thirsty mind the stream it craves:
There, with his slender rush beside him placed,
He drinks the knowledge in with greedy haste.
At early morning, when the frosty air
Brightens Orion and the northern Bear,
His distant window mid the dusky row,
Holds a dim light to passenger below.
—A light more dim is flashing on his mind,
That shows its darkness, and its views confined.
Had science shone around his early days,
How had his soul expanded in the blaze!
But penury bound him, and his mind in vain
Struggles and writhes beneath her iron chain.

—At length the taper fades, and distant cry
Of early sweep bespeaks the morning nigh;
Slowly it breaks,—and that rejoicing ray
That wakes the healthful country into day,
Tips the green hills, slants o'er the level plain,
Reddens the pool, and stream, and cottage pane,
And field, and garden, park, and stately hall,—
Now darts obliquely on his wretched wall.
He knows the wonted signal; shuts his book,
Slowly consigns it to its dusty nook;
Looks out awhile, with fixt and absent stare,
On crowded roofs, seen through the foggy air;
Stirs up the embers, takes his sickly draught,
Sighs at his fortunes, and resumes his craft.

THE WORLD IN THE HOUSE.

Pilgrims who journey in the narrow way,
Should go as little cumber'd as they may.
'T is heavy sailing with a freighted ship;
'T is pleasant travelling with a staff and scrip.
Gold clogs the path, dispose it how we will;
Makes it fatiguing as we climb the hill:
And 't is but here and there you may descry
The camel passing through the needle's eye.

'Love not the world'—most merciful decree,
That makes its friendship enmity to Thee!
Oh, if God had not said it,—did I know
Some way to bliss through luxury and show;
Might I have followed Christ to heaven's door,
With gold and purple, in my coach and four;
I dare not choose it—I would rather wait
A safer convoy at the rich man's gate.

See yonder modern mansion, light and fair,
Reared just beyond the taint of London air:
But not beyond, by many a dale and hill,
The taint of manners more unwholesome still.
Wide spreads in front the soft and sloping lawn,
With carriage roads in sweeping circles drawn:

The ample gardens, neat and well disposed,
Stretch far behind, by nectared walls enclosed;
The shrubbery-walks in serpent windings run;
The costly greenhouse blazes in the sun.
Rare fruits and flowers the gardener's skill employ,
More than the pampered owners can enjoy.
Within, a palace shines, superbly planned;
No pains nor cost were spared to make it *grand:*
Our thrifty merchants, fifty years ago,
Nor thought, nor dreamed of such a stately show.
The bloated master stalks delighted thence,
Proud of the thing, more proud of the expense.

Here dwells an old *professor* in his nest,
With comely wife and dashing daughters blest.
They, fresh from school, with all the native graces
They once possessed, quite polished off their faces;
A trifling, useless, unharmonious train,
Accomplished, artificial, showy, vain;
In all they do and say, and look and wear,
Aping the rank they were not born to bear:
And she, his help-meet, ever in her pride,
Teasing and pleading on the *worldly* side;—
Such is his household, such perchance, that he
Would blush to ask the Apostle *Paul* to tea.
—Not that the show and fashion of a place,
Itself, could certify the want of grace;
(Though bounds there are, so wise and safe to keep,
That watchful Christians rarely overleap:)
But 't is his soul, retaining earthly leaven,
Would fain keep terms and compromise with Heaven;
Striving, with pain, in Zion's paths to plod,
But holding Mammon for his household god.

Thus lives our merchant and his hopeful train,
Bound to the world, nor would they break the chain.
Its laws they own, its stamp and image bear,
There lies their portion, and their hearts are there.
Where then appears the faith they yet profess?—
Not in their looks, their language, or their dress;
But some cold forms remain, and some restraints,
To keep their name and place among the saints.
They seldom dance; they never play at cards;
One day in seven he duly still regards:
That tasty chapel, twice on Sabbath day,
Sees him and his, set out in fair array.
And much they praise—the ladies and their sire,
The favorite preacher whom they all admire;
—Some soft, and sleek, and seraph-spoken boy,
The rabble's wonder and the ladies' toy;
Snatched immature from academic bowers,
To dress up truth in artificial flowers.

Besides, our fair professor's name behold,
On neat *Esquired* committee-lists enrolled,
And long subscription-rows, that bring to light
Name, place, donation, and the annual mite;
Duly proclaiming every right hand deed,
Trusting the *left* has never learned to read.
A little gold, a morning or a day,
Spent in the cause, he freely gives away:
Perhaps, his pious zeal may even reach
The neat dimensions of an annual speech,
Gliding in well turned compliments along,
To every titled Christian in the throng.
The ladies too, his daughters, draw up rules
For lady-charities, and Sunday schools;

Set down their names, their fair committees call;
Busy and pleased, if they may manage all.
Meantime, the pious bustle, praised and told,
Has cost them nothing but their father's gold.

How customs and opinions change their place!
Religion, now, is scarcely in disgrace:
Her outward signs, at least, will even raise
Your credit high in these convenient days.
Fashion, herself, the cause of virtue pleads,
Becomes chief patroness of pious deeds,
And lets us e'en pursue, without restraint,
What once had stamped us *puritan* and *saint*.
The good is done,—let fashion bear her part,
And claim the praise, with all the Christian's heart:
Motives are *all* in Heaven's impartial eye;
But 't is not ours to doubt and give the lie:
Let each grant credit to his neighbor's share,
But analyze his own with utmost care.—
That thus the scale is turned, the praise is due
To Him, who hears and owns the righteous few;
Whose silent prayers and labors Heaven employs
To do the good, while others make the noise.

—'T is trite to praise the country's green retreats,
Opposed to city smoke and noisy streets;
And scores of epithets, all ready strung,
That theme will furnish to be said or sung.
The limpid streamlet and the whispering breeze
Slip into rhyme with such spontaneous ease,
That he must be an humble scribe indeed,
Who could not write it—or who loves to read.
Trite though it be, it is a task I choose;

[illegible]

[illegible] Know the [illegible] who [illegible] the [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[

As each were striving for a near approach—
Climax of grandeur!—*to* the lord mayor's coach.
—How short the triumph, many a prison cell,
And many a pining family could tell.—
The bridal equipage, in half a year
Brought to the hammer of the auctioneer,
Suffices not to liquidate the debt,
And fame's last bugle sounds in the *Gazette*;

Regions of intellect! serenely fair,
Hence let us rise, and breathe your purer air.
—There shine the stars! one intellectual glance
At that bright host,—on yon sublime expanse,
Might prove a cure;—well, say they, let them shine
With all our hearts,—but let *us* dress and dine.

There are, above the petty influence placed,
By human science and a mental taste.
The man who feels the dignity of thought,
By culture much refined, by science taught,
To loved pursuits devoted, looks below
With true contempt upon the paltry show:
Compared with those in pleasure's vortex hurled,
He loves it not, and lives above the world.

But happier he, who views the toys of time
From loftier heights, from regions more sublime;
Who walks with God while yet he sojourns here;
His hopes still climbing to a brighter sphere.
—Is he of wealth and earthly good possessed?
He takes Heaven's bounty with a cheerful zest.
His quarrel with the world you might not note
Erom texture, cut, or color of his coat;

[illegible] whether dress or speech,
[illegible] aims to reach.
[illegible] stands impress
[illegible] 'This is not my rest.'—
[illegible] remembrances ever springs
[illegible] things:
[illegible] dream spot,
[illegible] held them not.

[illegible] household reign;
[illegible] obtain.
[illegible] style,
[illegible] and smile;
[illegible] hears,
[illegible] theirs.
[illegible] modern air,
[illegible] there.
[illegible] chairs whose mould
[illegible] old.
[illegible]
[illegible] the room,
[illegible] crawl,
[illegible] veal.
[illegible] air.
[illegible] rare.—
[illegible] phlegm!
[illegible] of them.
[illegible] board
[illegible] afford:
[illegible]
[illegible] meal.
[illegible]
[illegible] him;

Taught from the very cradle to despise
The wish for more than hunger's claim supplies.
A pampered body, and a vigorous mind,
Are things, he deems, that cannot be combined;
And aiming thus the mental string to brace,
He rears a hardy, independent race.

His girls, a blooming train, their home adorn;
Simply attired, and cheerful as the morn:
Industrious, active, frugal, like their sire;
Trained to resist each frivolous desire;
To scorn the trifles that the sex pursues,
And rise superior to its petty views.
Slightly accomplished, but their minds are fraught
With taste and knowledge, and inured to thought.
Year after year, four precious hours a day,
Is thought by him too dear a price to pay
E'en for that art, which all the world reveres,
Up from the tradesman's daughter to the peer's.
Yet not with narrow, much mistaken view,
Would he deny them mental culture too;
Though vulgar zealots love to state the case,
That human learning is a foe to grace;
And rear their ill-bred, rude, illiterate youth,
To loathe their shackles, and despise the truth.

Religion here, in all her native grace,
Shines out serene in every heart and face:
Nor e'er is banished, though pursuits may claim
Attention oft, that do not bear her name.
Thus he adorns the doctrine he avows;
Thus in the fear of God, he guides his house.
And while it prospers, that memorial word,—

'The poor are always with you,' still is heard.
The hungry throng that crowd his open gate,
Not there, like *Lazarus*, unregarded wait;
Since each expensive pleasure is denied,
Which while it starves the needy, pampers pride.
Many condemn his plan, and many deem
He carries things to an absurd extreme;
Think he might live in style, and yet afford
A decent crum from his superfluous board:
—Still there were other poor, and still the sums
That style would cost, might furnish other crums.
'T is thus he argues, *thus* that order reads,
'Sell all thou hast, and give to him that needs.'
At that hard saying, many turn away;
Let him who can, receive it, and obey.

Oh, for a soul magnanimous, to know
Poor world, thy littleness, and let thee go!
Not with a gloomy, proud, ascetic mind,
That loves thee still, and only hates mankind;
Reverse the line, and that my temper be,
—To love mankind, and pour contempt on thee!

THE WORLD IN THE HEART.

—But if the foe no more without presides,
There is an inner chamber where it hides;
In that strong hold prepares its last defence;
And none but heavenly arms can drive it thence.
This is the *Christian's* conflict,—he alone
Pursues its flight to that interior throne.
This is the test that makes his title clear;
For only they approve their aim sincere,
Who seek the flattering world to dispossess
Where none but God and conscience have access.
All modes by man devised to purchase bliss,
Full well he knows are cheaper far than this:
Hence the attempt, with penance, pain, and loss,
And prayers, and alms, to frame a lighter cross.

To travel bare-foot to some hallowed shrine,
If this would do, how soon should Heaven be mine!
—To walk with God; resigning every weight,
To run with patience up to Zion's gate;
To hold affections fixt on things above;
To value heavenly more than earthly love;
To dread the frown of God's discerning eye,
More than the world's opprobrious calumny;

To keep faith's prospects prominent and clear;
To seek not rest, nor wish to find it here;
Is harder work—too hard for arms like ours,
Opposed by principalities and powers,
Had not our leader promised to supply
Helmet and shield from Heaven's own armory.

A ceaseless round of duty to fulfil,
Leaves the world's empire unmolested still;
Nor more effective every outward way,
By which we seek to disavow its sway.
The downcast look, grave habit, slow address,
Are vain attempts to make the labor less;
There is an *inward* army to pursue;
A mere external conflict will not do.

They who sincerely bid the world depart
Not only from the house, but from the heart,
Retreating wisely, where its torrent roars,
And anxious still to shut it out of doors,
Contract their wishes to the sober size
Of fire-side comfort, and domestic ties;
Yet *they* should deem the battle but begun,
Nor think at such light cost the victory won.
Whatever passes as a cloud, between
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,
Causing that better world to disappear,
Or seem unlovely, and the present dear,
That is our world, our idol, though it bear
Affection's impress, or devotion's air.

They who the quiet walks of life may choose,
Partly for Heaven's sake, partly for the muse;

Whose *taste* had led them from the giddy train,
Even if conscience did not say 'refrain;'
Though wise and good the choice, had need beware,
They shun an obvious, for a hidden snare:
The fair, bright paths of wit and learning may
Lead off directly from the narrow way.
The pride of intellect, the conscious height
The soul attains to in her mental flight,
At length may cause a less exalted seat
To seem too lowly at the Saviour's feet.
Music, the pencil, nature, books, the muse,
Have charms, and Heaven designed them for our use;
Yet who that knows and loves them, but could tell
The world disguised in all, in each may dwell,
With charm as fatal, with a spell as strong,
As that which circles pleasure's vacant throng.

'T is true: and therefore some pronounce in haste,
(Urged less by conscience than by want of taste)
A sweeping censure on the cultured mind;
And safety hope in ignorance to find.
Alas! they know not how the world can cheat;
Or rather, know not their own heart's deceit:
The ground that lies uncultured and unsown,
With rampant weeds is quickly overgrown.
And they who leave the mental field undrest,
Deeming all knowledge useless but the best,
And give those hours that duty freely spares,
Not to superior, but to vulgar cares,
Will find these lead from heavenly converse back,
Not less than those, and by a meaner track.
'T was by no *mental* feast, no *studious* thought,

Her soul was cumbered, and her Lord forgot,
Who lost the unction of His gracious word,
Which, waiting at His feet, another heard.
Those toils engrossed her that may hold the heart
In closest bondage from the better part:
And though that board was spread for such a guest
As none may now bid welcome to a feast,
Her guest, her Lord reproved her, as He will
The busy *Marthas*, serving, cumbered still.

Ask the good housewife, mid her bustling maids,
If ne'er the *world* her humbler sphere invades.
But if, (unconscious of its secret sway,)
She own it not, her eager looks betray.
Yes, there you find it, spite of locks and bars,
Hid in the store-room with her jams and jars;
It gilds her china, in her cupboard shines,
Works at the vent-peg of her homemade wines,
Each varied dainty to her board supplies,
And comes up smoking in her Christmas pies.

The charms of mental converse some may fear,
Who scruple not to lend a ready ear
To kitchen tales, of scandal, strife, and love,
Which make the maid and mistress *hand and glove;*
And ever deem the sin and danger less,
Merely for being in a vulgar dress.

Thus the world haunts, in forms of varied kind,
The intellectual and the groveling mind;
Now, sparkling in the muse's fair attire,
Now, red and busy at the kitchen fire.

And were you called to give a casting voice,
One to select, from such a meagre choice,
Deciding which life's purpose most mistook—
Would you not say,—the worldly minded *cook?*
Not intellectual vanity to flatter;
—Simply, that mind precedence claims of matter.

And she, whose nobler course is seen to shine,
At once, with human knowledge and divine;
Who, mental culture and domestic rites
In close and graceful amity unites;
Striving to hold them in their proper place,
Not interfering with her heavenly race;
Whose constant aim it is, and fervent prayer,
On earthly ground to breathe celestial air;—
Still, *she* could witness how the world betrays,
Steals softly in by unsuspected ways,
Her yielding soul from heavenly converse bears,
And holds her captive in its silken snares.
Could she not tell the trifles, that are brought
To rival Heaven, and drive it from her thought?
—Her heart (unconscious of the flow'ry trap)
Caught in the sprigs upon a baby's cap;
Thence disengaged, its freedom boasts awhile,
Till taken captive by the baby's smile.

But oh, how mournful when resistance fails,
The conflict slackens, and the foe prevails!
For instance—yonder matron, who appears
Softly descending in the vale of years;
And yet, with health, and constant care bestowed,
Still comely, *embonpoint*, and *à la mode*.

Once, in her youthful days, her heart was warm;
At least, her feelings wore devotion's form;
And ever since, to quell the rising doubt,
She makes that grain of godliness eke out.
With comfort still, the distant day she sees,
When grief or terror brought her to her knees;
When Christian friends rejoiced at what she told,
And bade her welcome to the Church's fold.
There still she rests, her words, her forms the same;
There holds profession's lamp without the flame:
Her Sabbaths come and go, with even pace;
Year after year you find her in her place,
And still no change apparent, saving that
Of time and fashion, in her face and hat.
She stands or kneels as usual, hears and sings;
Goes home and dines, and talks of other things;
Enjoys her comforts with as strong a *gôut*
As if they were not fading from her view;
And still is telling what she means to do:
Talks of events that happen to befall,
Not like a stranger, passing from it all,
But eager, anxious in their issue still,
Hoping this will not be, or that it will;
Getting, enjoying, all that can be had;
Amused with trifles, and at trifles sad:
While hope still whispers in her willing ears,
'Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years.'
A few, brief words her character portray—
—This world contents her, if she might but stay.
When true and fervent pilgrims round her press,
She inly wishes that their zeal were less.
Their works of love, their spirit, faith, and prayers,

Their calm indifference to the world's affairs,
Reproach her deadness, and she fain, for one,
Would call their zeal and ardor, *overdone.*

But what her thought is—what her hope and stay
In moments of reflection, who shall say?
—Time does not slacken, nay, he speeds his pace,
Bearing her onward to her finished race:
The common doom awaits her—'dust to dust;'
The young *may* soon receive it, but she *must.*
What is the Christian's course?—the Scriptures say,
'Brighter and brighter to the perfect day!'
Oh! does her earthly mind, her anxious heart,
Clinging to life, *not* longing to depart,
Her languid prayer, her graces dim and faint,
Meet that description of the growing saint?
Let her inquire (for far is spent the night)
If she be *meeten'd* for that world of light:
Where are her highest, best affections placed?—
Death may *improve,* but not *reverse* the taste:
Does she indeed the things of time prefer?
Then surely Heaven could not be Heaven to her.

Are there not portions of the sacred word,
So often preached and quoted, read and heard,
That, though of deepest import, and designed
With joy or fear to penetrate the mind,
They pass away with notice cold and brief,
Like drops of rain upon a glossy leaf?
—Such as the final sentence, on that day,
When all distinctions shall be done away
But those the righteous Judge shall bring to light,

Between the left-hand millions, and the right?
Here, in his word, in beams of light, it stands,
What will be then demanded at our hands;
Clear and unclouded now the page appears,
As even then, illum'd by blazing spheres.

—The question is not, if our earthly race
Was once enlightened by a flash of grace;
If we sustained a place on Zion's hill,
And called Him Lord—but if we did His will.
What, if the stranger, sick, and captive, lie
Naked and hungry, and we pass them by!
Or do but some extorted pittance throw,
To save our credit, not to ease their wo!
Or, strangers to the charity whence springs
The liberal heart, devising liberal things,
We, cumber'd ever with our own pursuits,
To others leave the labor and its fruits;
Pleading excuses for the crum we save,
For want of faith to cast it on the wave!
—Shall we go forth with joy to meet our Lord?
Enter His kingdom, reap the full reward?
—Can such His good, His faithful servants be,
Blest of the Father?—Read His word and see!

What, if in strange defiance of that rule,
Made not in *Moses'*, but the *Gospel* school,
Shining as clearly as the light of Heaven,
'They who forgive not, shall not be forgiven,'
We live in anger, hatred, envy, strife,
Still firmly hoping for eternal life;
And where the streams of Christian love should flow,

The root of bitterness is left to grow;
Resisting evil; indisposed to brook
A word of insult, or a scornful look;
And speak the language of the world in all,
Except the challenge and the leaden ball!

What if, mistrustful of its latent worth,
We hide our single talent in the earth!
And what if self is pampered, *not* denied!
What if the flesh is never crucified!
What if the world be hidden in the heart,—
Will it be, 'Come, ye blessed!'—or, 'Depart?'

Who then shall conquer?—who maintain the fight?
E'en they who walk by faith and not by sight:
Who having 'wash'd their robes and made them white,'
Press towards the mark, and see the promised land,
Not dim and distantly, but near at hand.
—We are but marching down a sloping hill
Without a moment's time for standing still;
Where every step accelerates the pace,
More and more rapid till we reach the base;
And then, no clinging to the yielding dust!
An ocean rolls below, and plunge we must.
What plainer language labors to express,
Thus, metaphoric is employed to dress:
And this but serves, on naked truth to throw
That hazy, indistinct, and distant glow,
Through which we wish the future to appear,—
Not as indeed it is,—true, awful, near.

And yet, amid the hurry, toil, and strife,
The claims, the urgencies, the whirl of life,—

The soul—perhaps in silence of the night—
Has flashes, transient intervals of light;
When things to come, without a shade of doubt,
In terrible reality stand out.
Those lucid moments suddenly present
A glance of truth, as though the heavens were rent;
And through that chasm of pure celestial light,
The future breaks upon the startled sight:
Life's vain pursuits, and Time's advancing pace,
Appear with death-bed clearness, face to face;
And Immortality's expanse sublime,
In just proportion to the speck of time:
While Death, uprising from the silent shades,
Shows his dark outline ere the vision fades;
In strong relief against the blazing sky,
Appears the shadow as it passes by.
And though o'erwhelming to the dazzled brain,
These are the moments when the mind is sane.
For then, a hope of Heaven—the Saviour's cross,
Seem what they are, and all things else but loss.
Oh! to be ready—ready for *that* day,
Would we not give earth's fairest toys away?—
Alas! how soon its interests cloud the view,
Rush in, and plunge us in the world anew!

Once *Paul* beheld, with more than mortal eye,
The unveiled glories of the upper sky:
And when descending from that vision's height,
(His faith and hope thenceforward turned to sight)
When he awoke and cast his eye anew,
Still aching, dazzled, wondering at the view,
On this dark world, how looked it? mean and dim;

And such it *is*, as then it seemed to him.
As when the eye a moment turns to gaze,
Adventurous, on the sun's meridian blaze,
The shining orb pursues where'er it roves,
And hides in gloom the fields, the hills, the groves:
'T was thus he saw the things that sense entice,
Fade in the glorious beam of Paradise;
And felt how far eternal joys outweigh
The light afflictions of our fleeting day.
Well might he then press forward to the prize,
And every weight, and every wo despise!

Oh, with what pity would his bosom glow,
For this poor world, and those who walk below,
When fresh from glory—fraught with Heaven, he view'd
The busy, eager, earth-bound multitude!
Each groping where his fondest treasure lies;
One at his farm, one at his merchandise:
—To see the cumber'd Christian faintly strive
To keep his doubtful spark of grace alive,
By formal service, paid one day in seven,
And brief, reluctant, misty thoughts of Heaven.
How would he weep, expostulate and pray!
For he had seen—but there the verse must stay:
Paul could not utter, nor his pencil draw—
Yet, there it is—that glory that he saw:
Now, even *now*—whatever vain designs
Engross our worldly spirits—there it shines!
Oh! place it not at time's remotest bound,
In doubtful distance, when the trump shall sound;
Since what we hope for,—yes, and what we fear,
Is even near as death,—and death is near!

The quiet chamber where the *Christian* sleeps,
And where, from year to year, he prays and weeps;
Whence, in the midnight watch, his thoughts arise
To those bright mansions where his treasure lies,—
How near it is to all his faith can see!
How short and peaceful may the passage be!
One heaving pulse—one feeble struggle o'er,
He enters the everlasting door.
Yes, [illegible] the bliss unspeakable, unseen,
[illegible] the veil of flesh between
[illegible] rend—and then display
[illegible] splendor of an endless day.
[illegible] elevates his mind;
[illegible] leaving all behind.—
[illegible] the tyrant foe is hurled,
[illegible] that overcomes the world.

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